CIDT

Exploring the Impact of the Improving Forest Governance (IFG) Course

A study on 4 years (2010-2013) of IFG course delivery.

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Executive Summary

This study explores the impact of the Improving Forest Governance course, a UK-based training programme aimed at frontline players in timber producing and processing countries. The course aims to build capacity of participants to engage in and lead on activities promoting better forest governance. This report looks at the extent to which course alumni have been able to improve forest governance, and illustrates the specific outcomes which demonstrate that.

This report finds that the outcomes of the training are varied, which reflects the diverse backgrounds and nationalities of course alumni. The outcomes that resulted from the training were then broadly categorized into 4 levels of change: No change in practice; Improvement in current practice, Adoption of new practices, and inspiring change of practice in others.

Course alumni achieving the highest level of change benefitted from one or more of a number of contextual factors. In countries with many course alumni or active communities of forest governance practitioners, there was more effective networking and more fertile environment for working on forest governance resulting in greater collaboration. In other situations, particular individual initiative, aided by strong institutional support, has also led to more substantial outcomes in improving forest governance.

Although benefits are difficult to attribute, there are clear illustrations of the kinds of outcomes that are being achieved. This study shows the need for more systematic data collection to capture more effectively the specific actions that result from the training and contribute to forest governance, which includes post-course communication pinned to a specific action plan. The benefits of such an approach are twofold; assisting the M&E of course impact, and also ensuring that participants are supported in turning their training into practice.

INTRODUCTION

The Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) has delivered the Improving Forest Governance (IFG) course for five years consecutively through DFID grant funding, with a final course to be delivered in 2015 under the current programmatic framework. The course is one of three outputs of CIDT's *Capacity Strengthening and Empowerment for Improved Forest Governance* (CSEIFG) project, funded from January 2012 – December 2014. The first two years of the course, 2010-2011, were funded as activities in their own right, prior to the grant award. A six month extension was granted until June 2015 to allow delivery of a further course, which falls outside the scope of this study.

The purpose of the course, as stated in the initial proposal, is to empower frontline players in forest governance by improving the capacity of key stakeholders in multi-stakeholder processes, such as the EU *Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade* (FLEGT) process and associated *Voluntary Partnership Agreements* (VPAs). The course is a 6-week intensive programme, hosted in the UK, with modules covering a range of knowledge and skills-based topics. The target audience ranged across sectors and continents, including government, civil society and private sector from countries interested or participating in FLEGT-VPA processes in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The purpose of the study was to explore and illustrate the impact of the course on participants, their organizations and countries, with a focus on tangible outcomes resulting from the training. It seeks to bring to light some stories of change from the participants themselves, whilst incorporating the perspectives of colleagues, employers and others who may be in a position to comment on the impact of the course.

This report provides background to the context of the course, before considering reflexively the approaches used to investigate impact, given the challenges inherent in studying capacity building interventions of the nature involved here. As an important element of the data collection involved in this study, it then outlines the anticipated impacts and the extent to which there is evidence of their achievement. Finally, the report comments on how the findings relate to strategic considerations for the future.

BACKGROUND TO THE IFG COURSE

The IFG course was a response to a lack of national capacity to implement initiatives to combat illegal logging. One of the main initiatives through illegal logging was being addressed,

The FLEGT Action Plan was conceived of as a way to combat illegal logging by preventing the import of illegal timber into the EU, improving the supply of legal timber, and increasing demand for timber from responsibly managed forests. The seven broad areas of focus within the FLEGT Action Plan1 are:

1. supporting timber-producing countries, including promoting fair solutions to the illegal logging problem
2. promoting trade in legal timber, including developing and implementing VPAs between the EU and timber-producing countries
3. promoting public procurement policies, including guidance on how to deal with legality when specifying timber in procurement procedures
4. supporting private sector initiatives, including encouraging voluntary codes of conduct for private companies sourcing timber
5. safeguarding financing and investment, including encouraging financial institutions investing in the forest sector to develop due care procedures
6. using existing or new legislation to support the Action Plan, including the EU Timber Regulation
7. addressing the problem of conflict timber, including supporting the development of an international definition of conflict timber

The Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) mentioned in point 2 above are a central part of the strategy to reduce illegal logging. A VPA is defined as:

"a bilateral trade agreement between the EU and a timber-exporting country outside the EU. Under a VPA, the timber-producing country develops systems to verify that is timber exports are legal, and the EU agrees to accept only licensed imports from that country."[2]

The VPA involves a country defining what is meant by legality, and thus what constitutes legal timber, and devising a Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS) which can guarantee that the legal status of timber for export. The VPAs have, in practice, been effective vehicles for promoting better forest governance by mandating a national, multistakeholder dialogue. This dialogue has in a number of countries resulted in government, the private sector and civil society contributing to the discussion on legality definitions, as well as ensuring that the TLAS system is effective and practicable.

Having a VPA that functions to ensure that timber exports are legal can be a long process. Initially, a formal expression of interest is required by the partner country government, following which a pre-negotiation or informing phase occurs. This period is when national stakeholders and identified, mobilized, informed and prepared for the VPA negotiations to follow. During the negotiation phase, the legality definition and terms of the VPA are defined. Finally, the implementation phase sees the plans laid out in the negotiation phase being put into practice. The broad national consensus

[1] http://www.euflegt.efi.int/flegt-action-plan
[2] http://www.euflegt.efi.int/glossary

required in these phases and the associated multi-stakeholder processes can be a real challenge for countries interested in a VPA, requiring effective, accountable and motivated governance processes.

The DFID Forest Governance, Markets and Climate programme aims to address deforestation and forest degradation by coordinating efforts with the EU FLEGT Programme, whilst also supporting governance and market reforms that reduce the illegal use of forest resource and benefit the poor. Building on previous support through the UK Forest Governance and Trade programme, which had already supported the VPA process in Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia and Indonesia, the FGMC programme responded to a larger number of countries now involved in the VPA process.

CIDT's project contributes to two particular outcomes stated in the programme strategic case and the logical framework:

- "Producer and processing countries with effective multi-stakeholder institutions for overseeing, implementing, enforcing and monitoring legal, policy and market reforms and actions that control illegally sourced timber and other agricultural commodities"
- "Knowledge and momentum for change, based on sound evidence, amongst the public, NGOs, private sector and governments"

CIDT's programme aim of 2009, aimed to "**empower frontline players working on initiatives to improve forest governance to understand the issues involved and practice skills such that they can take a more active role on their return**". In achieving this aim, course alumni would be contributing to the outputs mentioned above, taken from the FGMC Logframe. CIDT staff had previously been involved in the Mid-Term review of the Forest Governance and Trade Programme. A lack of in-country capacity had been identified as a substantial challenge, and the course aimed to address this problem.

CIDT's project incorporates the Improving Forest Governance course, match-funding to two EU funded projects focusing on improving forest governance in West and Central Africa, and a number of short, in-country capacity building events.

Course Objectives

The course objectives stated in the initial proposal, submitted to DFID in 2009, were clear, as shown in below[3].

Course Objectives:

At the end of four weeks, participants will be able to:

- Articulate why improving forest governance is a pre-requisite to REDD
- Explain the similarities and differences between REDD, FLEGT and CDM.
- Describe the range of international policy drivers affecting forestry practice
- Explain European demand for legal and sustainable products and how this links to CSR and forest certification
- Compare community based and Industrial concession forest management models and articulate the pros and cons between them
- Understand and demonstrate skills in the use of tools developed to improve forest governance
- Demonstrate effective understanding and use of tools of stakeholder analysis and problem analysis
- Demonstrate communication skills associated with managing a participatory meeting
- Verbally present an action plan on tactics to address the problem of forest governance in home situation
- Prepare a written analysis of a specific case where forest governance is a constraint and develop the strategy and tactics to improve the situation

However these objectives evolved when the course was incorporated within a project proposal submitted to DFID in 2011, which presented an updated course with further new objectives outlined in the box below[4].

[3] At this stage, the course was proposed as an activity in its own right, where it would later be part of a wider project.

Course Objectives:

At the end of six weeks, participants will be able to:

- Describe the range of international policy drivers affecting forestry practice;
- *Explain some of the key challenges involved in achieving improved forest governance at different levels;*
- *Appreciate your role within Multi-stakeholder processes and explain some of the key tools that you might use within these processes;*
- Understand and demonstrate skills in the use of tools needed to communicate effectively and influence change in order to improve forest governance;
- Explain European demand for legal and sustainable products and how this links to forest certification for FLEGT and REDD;
- *Understand the role that forests play in climate change and the main types of forest carbon markets;*
- Articulate why improving forest governance is a pre-requisite to REDD;
- *Articulate the economic value of forest including their contribution to the formal and informal economies;*
- *Draw on experiences from other countries including case studies and personal contacts that will support your work after the course;*
- Prepare a written analysis of a specific case from your home country situation or on-going work your organisation will be involved in where forest governance is a constraint and develop the strategy and tactics to improve the situation;
- *Design a costed and log-framed forest governance project proposal;*
- *Design and test a forest governance training programme.*

Additional indicators reflected lessons learned from the first two years of course delivery, as well as the changing landscape of grant delivery. As more countries moved further into the VPA process, the course responded to emerging needs. Multistakeholder processes, for example, clearly stood to benefit from participants having a greater understanding of the role of their counterparts, as well as the mechanisms through which the process could productively encourage consensus building. Furthermore, there was greater emphasis placed on the shared-learning aspect of the course, as certain countries faced issues which it may then have been possible to pre-empt in others.

These objectives have operated as indicators for the success or failure of course delivery and post-course evaluations have asked participants to comment on their progress towards achievement of the course objectives. However, these are not synonymous with project objectives, against which the effectiveness of the training as a method for improving forest governance might be measured. Taking *project* objectives as the foundation for indicators for the current study would produce a slightly different set of criteria against which success can be measured, although meeting the course objectives is a prerequisite to the achievement of project objectives. In addition to objectives set through the DfID FGMC Logframe, which provides broad and overarching project objectives, the project objective, as mentioned above, is to **empower frontline players working on initiatives to improve forest governance to understand the issues involved and practice skills such that they can take a more active role on their return**". Although this statement is arguably quite broad, it also accommodates the range of ways in which participants might use the training. However, of particular note is the statement that participants will not only be empowered, but take "a more active role on their return".

Course content

The course initially ran for four weeks duration, and comprised four modules for 2010/2011:

1. Forest Governance Issues
2. Enterprise Development and Sustainability
3. Communication and Presentation Skills
4. Illegal Logging update meeting (Chatham House event)

In the updated course proposal submitted to the FGMC programme, the course was extended to 6 weeks with an additional two modules added:

1. Drivers of Forest Governance
2. Participatory Planning and Communication
3. Developing Forest Trade Incentives
4. Climate Change & Ecosystem Valuation
5. Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation for Improving Forest Governance (Designing a costed and logframed forest governance project proposal)
6. Training of Trainers for Improving Forest Governance

In both proposals, the course was designed to be modular to allow some flexibility over attendance. In practice, certain modules were considered "core" and knowledge based (module 1-4). Modules 5 and 6 were considered optional, as they were skills-based and likely to be more useful to individuals in specific roles. In 2013, 2 more modules were added on "Developing a Communications Strategy" and "Timber Legality Assurance Systems". These modules were also optional with 2 modules running in tandem.

The modular approach was a strategic decision that aimed to address concerns around the length of the course. Some of the more senior, or more engaged frontline forest governance practitioners, it was noted, might not be able to be absent from their jobs for prolonged periods. The optional modules were designed to enable important training topics to be covered which might not have been relevant to all participants. Being able to fundraise for new initiatives, for example, might not be as relevant for some government participants as it would for some civil society participants.

Target Audience and Selection Process

As important as the content of the course, and indeed underpinning its relevance, is the audience to whom it is delivered. There is a real risk that training targeted at the wrong individuals limits the possibility to create impact.

From the initial proposal the importance of criteria that "ensure[s] that the selection of participants will lead to impact on the ground" was emphasised. The course was aimed at early and mid-career positions that would be able to stimulate "broad and innovative thinking on new models of forestry and the timber trade". The rationale for selecting early to mid-level professionals is that these individuals are more likely to open-minded about innovative ideas, and career active for long enough to see them through to fruition. The flipside is that they may not have sufficient influence to be able to push through new ideas on return to their country. However as the course is aimed at promoting long-term engagement in forest governance it will be too early to judge many outcomes.

Given the broad geographical and cross-sector scope of the IFG target audience, the participant selection process has been critically important. Three selection criteria provide a starting point for considering applications: that their organisation has not benefitted from more than one place in the

past 3 years; that they are working in a VPA country; or if not working in a VPA country, from a developing country and in a highly relevant role to be able to influence the participation of the forest sector in relation to FLEGT/VPA.

In practice, course selection has consisted of a number of steps:

1. Dissemination of course information and invitation of applications through formal and informal channels, nationally and internationally.
2. Provisional selection of participants based on submitted applications. Application forms require applicants to explain their role in detail, and relevance of the course to them. It also asks them to set specific objectives which they would work towards upon completion of the training. The selection of participants is weighted to ensure diverse representation from sectors, countries and to positively promote the inclusion of women.
3. Feedback on shortlisted candidates sought from a range of partners and relevant stakeholder organisations to validate the provisional selection and get views from those familiar with key players in the VPA process. .

Furthermore, given the high value of the scholarship, it has been very important for the selection process to be transparent and equitable, allowing CIDT to be able to strongly justify its selections to partners. This has been necessary on a number of occasions given the high competition for places and surplus of worthy candidates. Stringent, rigorous selection is evidently a primary concern for the effectiveness of the course, as highly motivated and appropriate participants are requisite for the outcomes expected within the FGMC grant and to meet the broader objectives of the project.

Course Alumni 2010-2013

The course received core funding from DfID for 18 participant places. From this core-funding, CIDT was able to leverage additional funding from other organisations, including Global Witness, EFI, FAO, IUCN, GiZ and WWF to support additional participants. As a result, over the four years of delivery 2010-2013, 115 participants were able to attend the trainin. Amongst these 115 participants, 20 countries have been represented comprising 85 individuals from Africa, 28 from Asia and 2 from Latin America[5].

Reflecting a focus on countries engaged in the EU FLEGT Action Plan as well as DFID target countries which, in the context of the FGMC programme, are congruent with countries showing the most potential for progress in the FLEGT Action Plan. Therefore, the majority of these participants were sent from countries negotiating (some now implementing) Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs). Participants from non-VPA countries have been selected for a number of reasons: to increase buy-in of countries considering VPAs; to meet the strategic needs of specific funders, or to enhance international experience sharing.

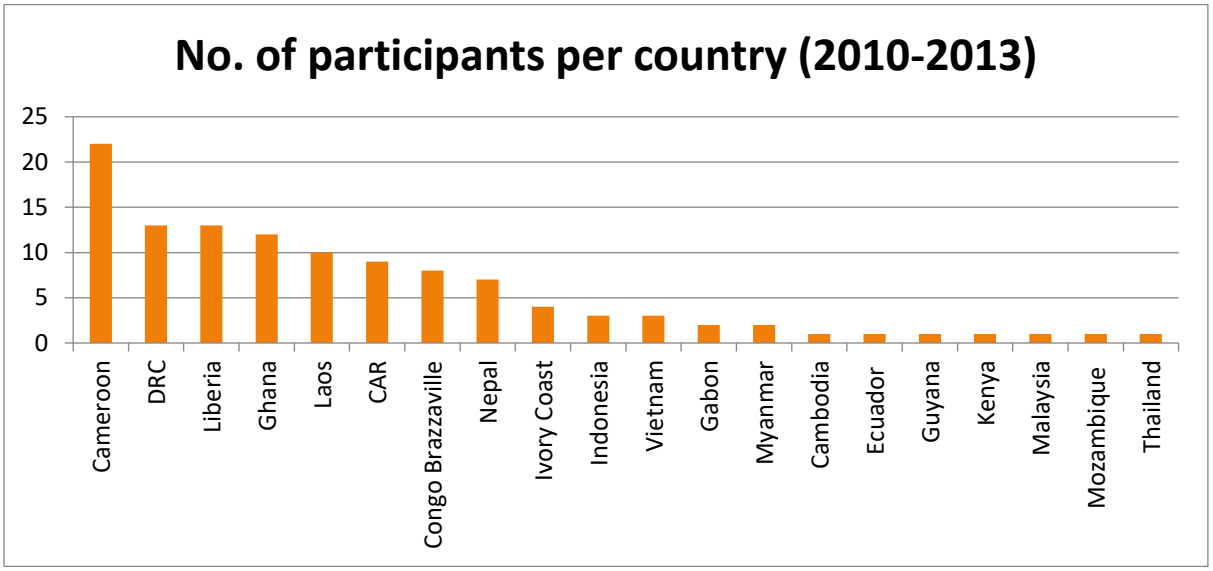


Figure 1: IFG participants by country

Figure 1, which includes both DFID and non-DFID funded participants, shows that participants from Cameroon have featured most heavily on the course – having sent nearly twice as many participants as any other country. With the exception of Laos, there is a predominance of African participants with a fairly even balance between Anglo- and Francophone countries. In many years, the DFID selection of participants was supplemented by non-DFID sponsored participants from Cameroon, contributing to the high number of participants. In the countries with high representation it was expected that the study might find a greater degree of networking and cooperation, particularly given the regional proximity of those countries.

[5] In 2014 and 2015, funding support by EFI has greatly increased the number of Latin American participants on the course.

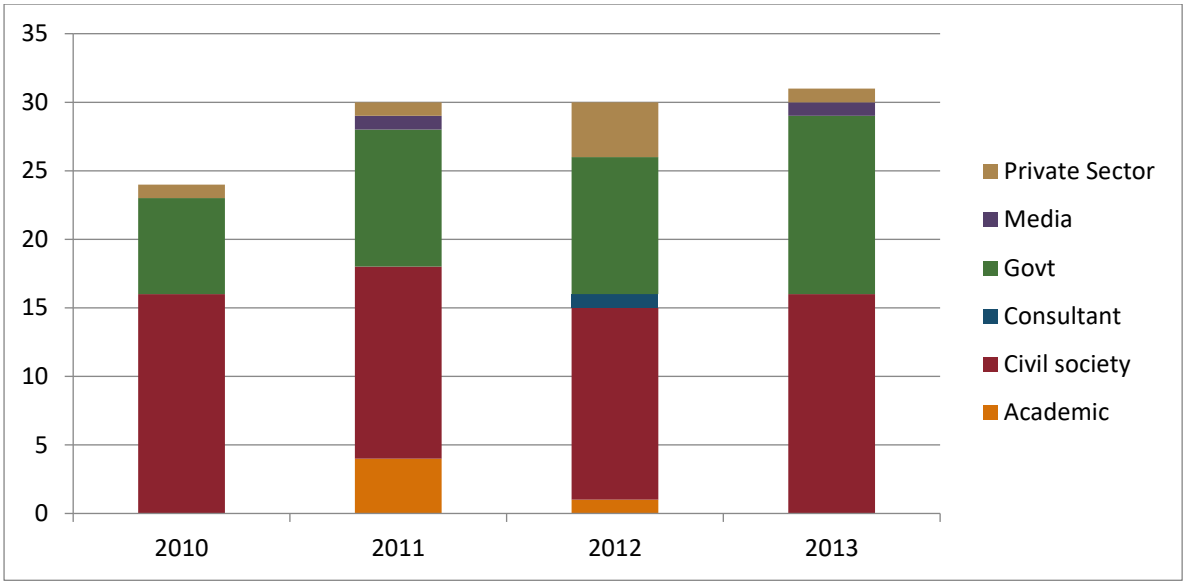


Figure 2: Sectoral Representation of IFG participants 2010-2013

Figure 2 above shows the sector breakdown of course participants. Overwhelmingly, course participants have represented either Government or Civil Society. However, these are broad titles for sectors which contain many different institutions and roles. Private sector, for example, encompasses both large domestic timber traders, as well as chainsaw harvesting small enterprises. However, the perspectives of participants from each of those are likely to be very different. Therefore participants within one broad sector engage with forest governance in different ways, with varying objectives.

With the exception of the private sector, the lower representation amongst other sectors is justified. Whilst the Media and Academia can and do play important roles in forest governance, actors from other sectors have more central involvement in initiatives like the FLEGT Action Plan. The relative absence of the private sector then, should be considered a challenge as they were stated in both proposals to play an important role in forest governance processes.

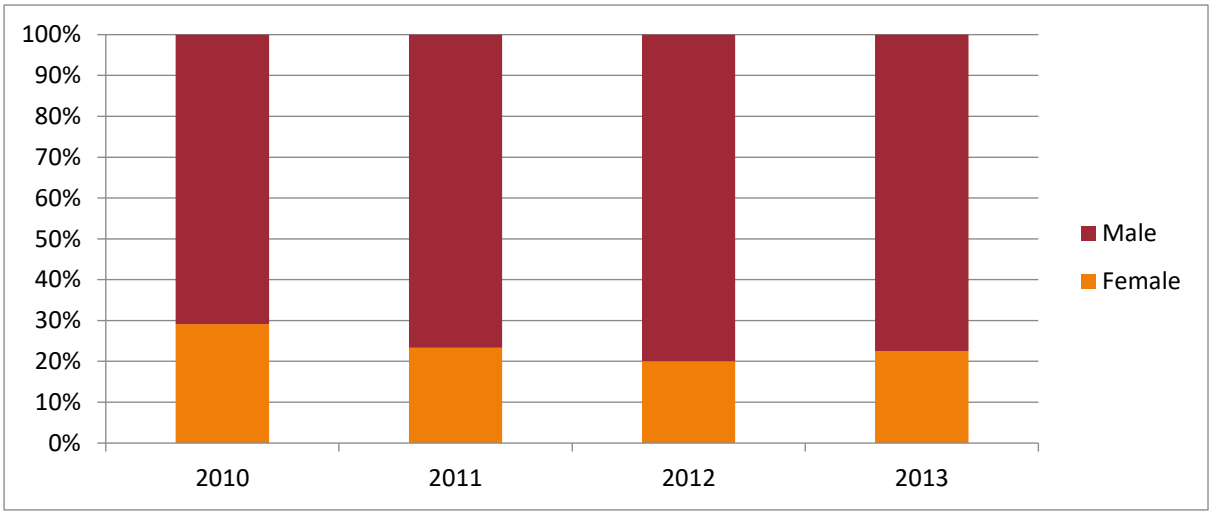


Figure 3: Gender Balance of IFG Participants 2010-2013

The other important consideration that informs course selection is gender. The course actively tries to promote the inclusion of women and has used a weighted selection process to favour candidates

from underrepresented stakeholder groups. However, there has still been a dominance of male participants, comprising 70-80% of course participants every year [Figure 3]. This reflects a similar challenge to that countenanced in engaging with the private sector, in that the final selection of participants ultimately reflects the applications received.

One final and not insignificant way in which course participants could be "categorized" is by their language group. The course has involved delivery in French and English and facilitated serious engagement between Franco- and Anglophone Africa. All course materials are provided in both languages and sessions taught with simultaneous interpretation, allowing genuine interaction between participants that is not restricted by a language barrier. 56 participants have come from Francophone Africa, with the remaining 59 coming from Anglophone Africa, Asia and Latin America.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

CIDT has conducted evaluations at 5 levels: pre-course evaluation; module evaluations; mid-course review; internal tutor-led reflection and post-course evaluation. In addition to this, an external evaluator was commissioned for an evaluation (for internal purposes) in 2012 to review the progress of the wider Capacity Strengthening and Empowerment to Improve Forest Governance (CSEIFG) project, of which the course is a key component. This study sought to critically engage with the delivery of the IFG course and its reception by participants, also touching upon the outcomes that were achieved in participant-sending countries. In 2014, as part of a DfID review into the progress of the Forest Governance, Markets and Climate (FGMC) programme, Itad/ Triple line conducted a survey [Annex C] of all course alumni to assess the impact of the course on participants, structuring questions to address knowledge, attitude and practice. There has also been a small, internal post-course impact tracing in 2011.

The results of the Itad/ Triple Line survey attested to positive changes in knowledge, attitude and practice, with 71% of respondents stating that they have taken specific steps to act upon key challenges in improving forest governance. A number of respondents pointed to specific activities that had come out of the training, but it isn't clear from the limited response possible in a survey the extent to which individual context, attribution and social desirability bias affect the stated impact.

The primary objective of this impact study is thus to follow on from survey work commenced by Itad/ Tripleline to measure and explore the extent to which the IFG course provision from 2010 to 2014 has met its stated objectives.

Through CIDT's networks and wider engagement in participant-sending countries, some anecdotal evidence relating to impact has emerged. This study seeks to explore more fully and more rigorously the story and context of those outcomes, the impact they contribute to, and the extent to which the course can be said to be responsible for it. By understanding the detail that has led to the most substantial outcomes, it may be possible to better inform the project and future selection processes. To that end, it will also test assumptions that capacity building of this type will translate into change on the ground.

METHODOLOGY

A methodology was not outlined in detail at the start the start of the study, but it was hoped, in terms of scope, that the study would focus on the Impact principle of the DAC criteria[6]. This section will describe some general challenges in methodological design, available data and the approach that this resulted in.

Assessing Impact of Capacity Building Interventions

The nature of general capacity building activities such as IFG means that outcomes are often contributing to broader processes which are difficult to attribute in isolation. In the CSEIFG proposal, it is noted that the "course should not be seen in isolation… but as a contribution towards a broader needs-based capacity building programme for VPA countries". Thus, the training contributes to, but cannot claim to be uniquely responsible for, the impacts achieved in broader processes. Political momentum for change might be measured through the pace of progress towards implementing a VPA, for example, but attributing that to any one activity would be a difficult exercise.

The outcomes and impact of capacity building programmes can be difficult to quantify, with substantial challenges relating to measurement and attribution. While there are a number of existing tools and systems for conducting Impact Assessments, many of them require data which cannot be reliably collected *ex-post*, or are designed to measure clearly defined indicators with distinct channels of attribution. Regarding studies similar to the current one, an INTRAC paper states that:

"If the capacity building is of a more general nature, seeking improvements in the invisible core areas of vision, values and culture… then it will be impossible to trace all the wider results (whether positive or negative) as they spread out in time and space. In these circumstances, the best than can be done is to record some of the changes that have occurred. In other words to illustrate change by highlighting specific examples" [7]

This rationale, in addition to the reality of available data informed the development of a qualitative methodology focusing on participant perspectives and participant experiences. Instead of measuring changes, the intention was to illustrate changes both to attest to the impact of the course and to inform more systematic evaluation planning; enabling more comprehensive impact studies in the future.

Available Data

CIDT has conducted annual post-course evaluations, one small post-course review in 2011 date and a more substantive externally led mid-term review in 2012, to gauge the effectiveness of the delivery of the course, and to assess how it is received by participants. Some of this evaluation work has touched upon broader course impact, but this has not been thoroughly investigated. The variety

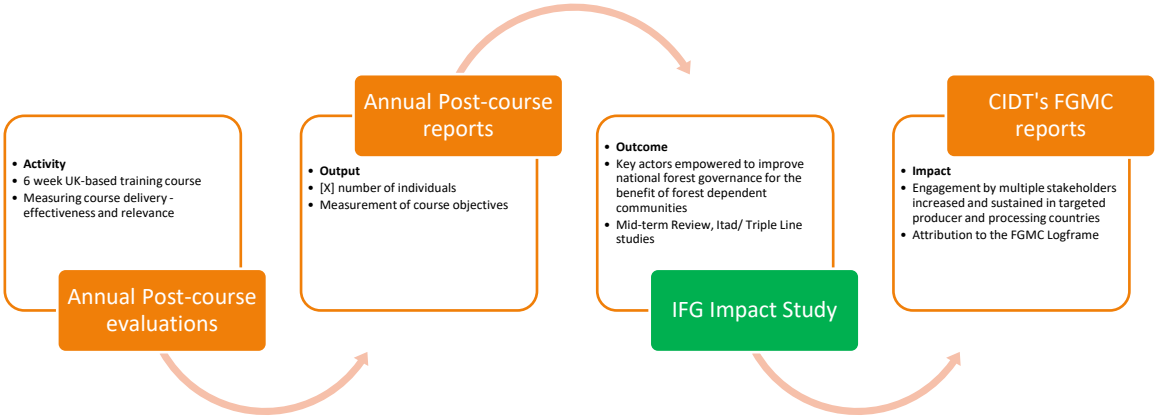
[6] Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Criteria in "Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance) Accessed 02/06/15: http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/50584880.pdf

[7] Pp.8 Simister & Smith (2010) "Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity Building: Is it really that difficult?", INTRAC Praxis Paper 23.

of participant representation on the course, the breadth of topics covered, and the individual level of change, means that outcomes and impacts are likely to be diffuse and difficult to capture.

The M&E activities mentioned above have provided useful feedback on course implementation, and enabled course facilitators to make adjustments to course delivery to improve it in subsequent years. However, it was not designed to capture the impact of the training and indeed, fails to adequately answer questions of this nature. In the initial proposal, evaluation was designed as a mechanism to improve quality of delivery, but did not go as far as to discuss looking at impact.

The diagram below indicates different levels of CIDT and DFID M&E and shows where this study fits within them.



Post-course evaluations provide detailed feedback on the course as experienced by participants, whilst also starting to look at how participants will use the training in practice. However, the proximity of this engagement to the conclusion of the course means that, often, it is too soon to explore how participants are using the training.

Course reports, meanwhile, have primarily discussed course delivery, reflecting on the participant experience and incorporating the findings of course and post-course evaluations. Indeed, these evaluations have involved forward-looking questions of how the training will be used, but this is not tested on the ground. From a reporting perspective, these reports detail the logistics of the activity from a quality control perspective for the benefit of funders.

FGMC reporting is intended to focus on outcomes and impact, showing contribution to indicators within the overall FGMC logical framework. There is a gap between knowledge about the effectiveness of the delivery of the course, and knowledge about the effectiveness of the course as a development intervention, which is an important purpose of the current study.

Although the need for capacity building of the nature of IFG was identified through the Mid-Term review of the FGT programme, this did not amount to a specific needs assessment or the establishment of a baseline. As such, the systematic development of indicators for assessing impact have not been established - this makes *measuring* impact difficult. Nevertheless, by illustrating

impact it may be possible to develop tools and systems to enable the establishment of baselines or indicators for the future.

Approach

Previous surveys, course evaluations and anecdotal evidence lend support to the idea that IFG outcomes are heterogeneous, and highly dependent on context calling for an exploratory methodology. As such, reviewing course documentation didn't result in the emergence of a clear baseline or indicators upon which to base the study, or against which to measure impact.

A primary and perhaps unforeseen task of the Impact Study was thus to consider and justify an appropriate methodology which adequately addresses the current gaps in knowledge relating to impact. The study therefore aimed to explore the stories of change experienced by participants and triangulate them across countries, sectors and with other stakeholders where possible. This involved two broad sets of respondents:

Interviews with delivery-side stakeholders

"Delivery-side stakeholders" is used as a term to incorporate course facilitators, course tutors and course funders. Many people within these groups will have played an important role in the setting and achievement of objectives for the course and would be in the best position to elaborate on anticipated outcomes and supplement course documentation. Interviews with CIDT staff were an important part of this, and were also used to identify relevant external stakeholders beyond those identified from course documentation. These interviews provided some focus and expectations through which the interviews with alumni could then be viewed.

Interviews with Course Alumni

Interviews with course alumni formed the most substantial data collection component of this study and took place subsequent to the initial delivery-side interviews. The course is a significant investment in an individual, and as such it requires a significant understanding of individual context in order to demonstrate the impact of the training in a meaningful way. To be able to explore this context in detail, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

A question set was developed which aimed to provide the interviewer with a deeper understanding of the context in which the individual worked, before discussing the rationale for attendance, and ultimately the outcomes and impact of the course. Whilst being careful not to lead interview respondents through the framing of questions or suggestion, the questions did nonetheless approach the question of impact through a number of different angles to explore as thoroughly as possible. The semi-structured nature of the interview meant the format could respond to the need, or not, for probing the details of topics and to ensure that different descriptions of impact could be investigated effectively.

In 2011, and others years to a lesser extent, participants undertook a specific Course Action Plan/Assignment related to forest governance. This involved participants discussing personal objectives with course tutors to develop practical steps that they could implement upon return to their country. The feasibility and specificity of these assignments varied, according to those involved in course delivery, so the outcomes they might result in were equally varied. However there was no systematic or standardized archiving of assignments and they were not followed by periodic check-ups to assess progress and challenges. The Action Plan modality could potentially provide indicators

for measuring outcomes in the future, but were not systematically implemented for the purpose of meaningful use by this study.

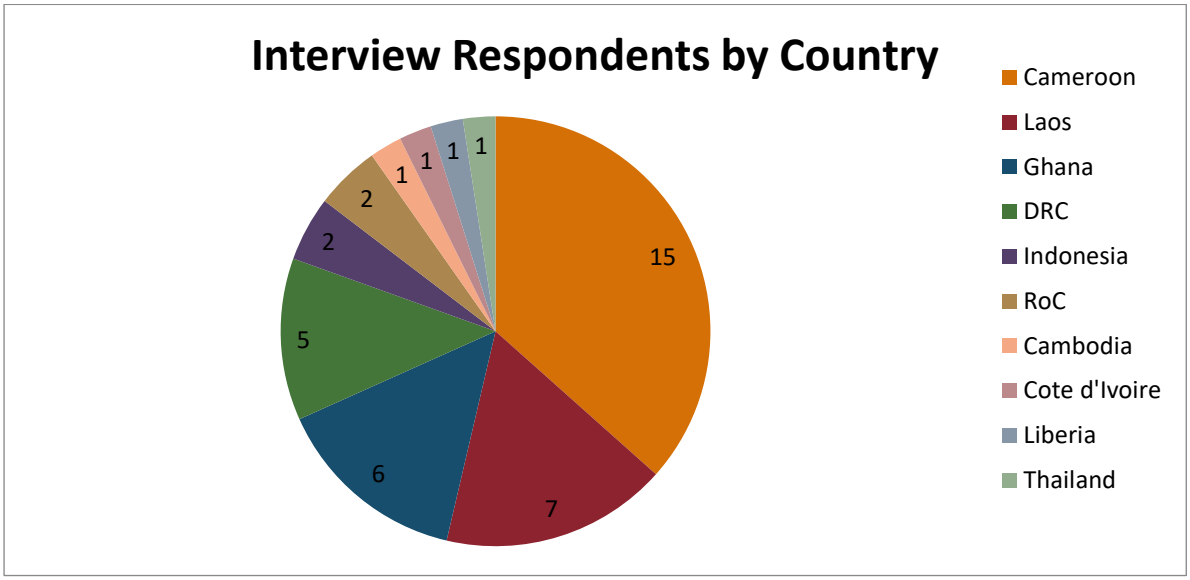
Triangulating Stated Outcomes

As some outcomes relating to capacity building could be quite subtle, particularly where they come from a general increase in knowledge, or a general attitudinal change, it is difficult to assess the veracity of claims to impact. Therefore, where possible and relevant, follow-up interviews were conducted with third parties including colleagues or employers. Where the stated outcome or impact related to specific activities, relevant materials were reviewed.

Selection of Interview Respondents

To reflect the greater depth of interaction with respondents, the study selected a weighted sample of 42 alumni, attempting to mirror the proportional representation of sectors, countries, continents and gender on the course. Interviews were conducted in-country for Cameroon, Ghana and Lao PDR given the high number of alumni in those countries.

The selection of respondents was intended to mirror the representation on the course, rather than selecting a random sample. This was to allow the study to look at specific questions around whether or not having multiple participants from certain countries has resulted in multiplier effects and whether alumni were able to achieve significant outcomes as the sole representative of a country



Limitations

In selecting a qualitative approach which focusses on the perspectives of course alumni, there are clearly potential issues around objectivity. In attempting to address these issues, it is important to be transparent about the degree of attribution, and to present the outcomes as reported, rather than necessarily measured. The most significant limitation with this methodology is the subjective nature of an approach which is devoid of a pre-established baseline, and the implications that has for issues around attribution. This was mitigated, to an extent, with the framing of questions to focus on specific, tangible outcomes and to test the detail of statements which might otherwise be interpreted as generic.

To try to qualify the stated improvement in general performance, the perspectives of employers were consulted, but this was not always feasible for a number of reasons. To make the perspective

relevant, the individual who supported the participant's application (not necessarily synonymous with employer) would need to be consulted, and to have had substantial interaction with the individual's work before and after the training. In many cases, such a perspective was not available as one parties' responsibilities may have changed, or they may have even changed jobs.

It was difficult to contact alumni, some of whom had changed email addresses and phone numbers. People in more remote areas, particularly in countries like the DRC, were difficult to reach even with up-to-date information as they did not have frequent access to the internet.

Amendments to the initial respondent selection were made resulting from two issues affecting access to respondents. The Ebola virus outbreak limited communication with alumni in Liberia, whilst significant communications limitations made contact with alumni based in more remote locations very difficult. In mitigation, some respondents completed a paper-based questionnaire but this had more limited value than the semi-structured interviews

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Outcomes are understood here to be the results that evidence the achievement or not of impact and project objectives. Course and project documentation were used to draw out anticipated outcomes, which were further supplemented through interviews with course facilitators, tutors, and other interested parties. These outcomes can be broadly categorized into Primary and Secondary outcomes, in that some are central to the course, whilst others may be incidental or part of optional elements of the course. Primary outcomes might be further defined as those which are expected to be exhibited by a majority of alumni. Conversely, Secondary Outcomes might be exhibited in fewer alumni and more dependent on individual contexts. Reflecting the diversity of backgrounds represented on the course, some objectives might not be expected to apply to all participants.

As a result of this process, five primary outcomes and five secondary outcomes were identified, and are outlined in the box below. The interviews with course alumni were then interpreted against, although not restricted by these outcomes. The following section draws out how interviews with alumni supported or not anticipated outcomes and, ultimately, provides a body of data with which to compare how presumptions about the outcome of the training are practiced in reality. A number of brief case studies are also used to provide detail to the ways in which outcomes are discussed.

Primary Outcomes	**Secondary Outcomes**
Improvement in Knowledge and Understanding of Forest Governance Issues	Sharing of learning upon return to country
Better understanding of the different roles in a multistakeholder process	Greater success in the acquisition of funding for projects
Sustained engagement in forest governance processes	More effective trainers
Influence on career trajectory	Better presentation skills
Stronger communication skills	Development of a network of forest governance alumni

Primary Outcomes

Improvement in Knowledge and Understanding of Forest Governance Issues

The majority of the course content contributes in some way to this outcome which is strongly related to individual context. For organisations already heavily involved in forest governance issues, it might mean that the individual is given greater responsibilities. In organisations new to forest governance, it might make the course participant a key resource person. In organisations with a more tangential involvement with forest governance, it might lead to a greater appreciation of its significance demonstrated through redirection of resources.

Of central importance to a thorough understanding is being better able to critically engage with a topic, meaning that the course has not simply transferred knowledge, but also equipped participants with the skills to analyse and critique many aspects of governance. The ability to critically engage with unfolding issues and situations means that participants would continue to build capacity in new areas without necessitating further training interventions. The course content is designed to encourage *deep learning* as oppose to *surface learning*, and as such should encourage alumni to examine new facts and ideas critically.

In terms of course outcomes, this is clearly the most fundamental to the success of the course. It was reported in a number of ways, with some framing it as the confidence to participate more fully in a variety of areas of their work, whilst others pointed to specific activities which had required such an understanding. When asked why and how the training had helped their understanding of forest governance, alumni frequently used the word “holistic”. Respondents felt that the course enabled people to develop not only a deep understanding of forest governance, but also to contextualise it through a thorough appreciation of the drivers of poor governance. In cases where participants had been on other training courses with some overlapping themes, they pointed to the length and depth of training offered by the IFG course as being particularly noteworthy.

Commonly, this outcome also aligned with the rationale for attending the course for the majority of participants. Many explained that their employers had felt the need for a broad but also deep understanding of forest governance issues within their department. It was not necessarily in relation to a specific objective that participants were put forward to attend the course, but in acknowledgement of a general lack of understanding within their respective department/organisation. In fewer cases, the rationale for attending was related to specific actions to be implemented upon the participants’ return; to develop, for example, a training course themed around forest governance.

Alex Agyemang-Prempeh Koranteng, Ghana

Alex is the Customer Services Manager for the Forestry Commission and part of the VPA multi-stakeholder committee. Since he attended the course in 2013, his role has embodied a greater focus on FLEGT programs and handling any associated complaints or infractions arising from the Legality Assurance System.

Alex was mobilized to attend the course after a more senior colleague who had been nominated to attend was unable to. However, as a result of his attendance, Alex felt he had "broadened horizons, [and was] more flexible, more confident in the way [he] interacts with people through meetings and discussions". He attributed this to the deep learning facilitated by the course, and is able to apply it directly within the sphere of functions entailed in his job.

Accordingly, many respondents reported that the course had helped them in a general sense, which was demonstrated through an improved capacity to perform the range of duties required in their professional roles. Participants described, for example, being feeling more responsible and accountable because of a better understanding of forest governance and, as a result, more proactive in meetings, more comfortable in advising more senior staff, and more effective at communicating with a broader range of stakeholders. In some cases, it was difficult to draw out specific examples which reference this improved capacity, perhaps due to the time elapsed since participation in the course. A private sector participant stated that "to be honest, maybe because of the nature of the job, working directly with the company on the ground, [he was] not sure that he could say he developed something specific".

One respondent reported that although the FLEGT process was not a central concern for his country at the time of his participation, that he is now a key resource person for the process going forward as interest in the process is gaining more political attention. Another reported that because of his understanding of the issues in the context of FLEGT-VPA that he had been able to articulate to colleagues the benefits of access to the European Markets, instead of selling wood to Asian buyers; effectively lobbying colleagues in other departments to look at VPAs in greater detail.

Some alumni commented that the depth of their understanding about the core issues allowed them to utilize it in a wide range of their responsibilities. For example, the communication skills which are introduced in the context of promoting better multi-stakeholder processes are easily transferable to other aspects of professional life. This led one respondent to question how he was able to do his job prior to the training, feeling that it had touched on many aspects of his professional responsibilities.

Commenting on the length of the course, a different respondent noted that the course helped to facilitate deep engagement with Forest Governance Issues. He described how now, when people talk about governance, he is able to drill down into the detail and analyse which key principles are not being respected; this, he noted, was important in allowing him to be able to find appropriate solutions to problems. Although some participants conceded that the impact is not so visible, they felt that it manifests itself in an improvement in their daily work.

When asked which elements of the training had been most useful and to which specific elements of their job, many participants were able to describe the sessions and tools that they received from the course in significant detail. One respondent who had found stakeholder analysis particularly useful, for example, was able to present a diagram in which he had mapped out the different objectives of different stakeholders as part of a project he was working on.

When following up with employers and colleagues to triangulate some of

Khamphone Bounthavy, Lao PDR

Khamphone is a Forest Officer for the Department of Forest Inspection for the Government of Lao PDR. The Department of Forest Inspection is mandated to enforce forest law, and is at the heart of initiatives to promote good forest governance in Laos.

When he attended in 2012, he wanted to gain broad knowledge of FLEGT to allow him to occupy a more substantial role in associated activities. He also found the logical framework training particularly useful in analyzing problems and developing appropriate interventions.

He notes that sometimes he is consulted for his knowledge and understanding of forest governance issues. In such circumstances, he has the chance to raise issues he learned of on the course. However, he also added that his Junior position meant that this interaction needed to be instigated by his superiors. He further added that when donors come to work with his department, contact is limited to the Director-General and despite his training.

the statements made by course participants, it became evident that different employers were invested in the training to various degrees. In one instance, the employer had been particularly engaged in supporting their employee's application and, as a result, was very descriptive about how she had noticed an improvement in the performance of her employee. IN that same example, the employee described being given plenty of space and opportunity to put her learning into practice, which had helped secure and integrate her learning into her job. In a different instance, the employer was able to describe the impact of the course in very vague terms. Moreover, the employer was unclear of the title of the course, and incorrectly stated that a number of his department had attended the training. It was notable, in this instance, that the course participant had also stated a lack of support (in terms of being given the time or space) to pursue ideas that had resulted from the IFG course. Ultimately, the support of the employer, and its influence on the impact of the training appeared to be very relevant in some cases, but less so in others.

Example 1

Close working relationship between employee and employer.

Clear professional opportunities to utilize improved knowledge, and supported in doing so.

Personal investment in course from both parties.

Outcomes are clear, meaningful and result in a change of practice.

Example 2

Impersonal relationship between employee and employer.

Employee not given time to utilize improved knowledge, though opportunities do exist.

Personal investment from participant, prestige interest from employer (ie, good for department's reputation).

Outcomes are less obvious, and professional practice is business-as-usual.

In cases where employers, or indeed the participants themselves had clear and achievable objectives, it was easier for respondents to be specific about what the training had resulted in. For example, one participant reported that his organisation had, prior to the course, been asked to conduct a study on how to implement a national wood traceability system. It was only during the course that the individual was able to get the information and tools, in part from the training and in part from

Ynsa Traore, Cote d'Ivoire

Ynsa attended the course in 2012 as the Head of Service for the Conservation of Forests and Natural Resources, a department within the National Office of Technical Studies and Development in the Environment Ministry of Cote d'Ivoire.

His work was mainly involved in conducting assessments (eg. socio-economic studies, inventories of local populations) that would feed into national management plans. When he left to attend the course, his department had been asked to conduct a study looking at how to implement a national wood traceability system; prior to the course, he had very little capacity to do this, noting that he had no idea what a legality grid was.

Not only did he acquire the necessary knowledge about traceability systems to be able to apply it in his own country, but he felt that interaction with participants helped him realize that many countries were at a much more advanced stage than his own. Accordingly, this motivated him to integrate this learning into his own national context, a process benefitted immensely by learning the experience of other course participants.

discussions with other course participants, necessary to implement this activity.

There were also specific outcomes resulting from the course which did not relate to pre-set objectives. One respondent reported that she had been instrumental in establishing a working group bringing together people working on FLEGT and REDD+. As a result of the IFG course, she became more aware of the synergies between the two policy processes and sought to maximise these between people working in the relevant fields.

However positive responses from participants were not unanimous, with one respondent feeling that he had not significantly improve his understanding of forest governance. He had been heavily involved in the VPA process before the course and felt that, as a result, he had not benefitted from the forest governance aspects of the course as much as other participants. However, he felt it had been useful to update his knowledge and sharing with participants from other countries, and also noted that he was still in touch with a number of them. Furthermore, he commented that the course elements relating to soft skills, in particular lobbying and presentation skills, had been useful to him on a personal level.

Better understanding of the Different Roles in a Multi-stakeholder Process

The course offers a rare or even unique opportunity for people to engage with individuals representing not only other countries, but also other roles within multi-stakeholder processes in an environment that is, at least partially, detached from the fierce national socio-politics of the FG sector. This involves exposure to the range of viewpoints present within participants' own countries, and in all cases involved exposure to the range of viewpoints present in a range of countries from across continents. This exposure presents a significant opportunity for cross-fertilisation of ideas and exchange of knowledge, as the lessons learned from one country may benefit the processes in another. As much as the taught content, this is a key way for course participants to learn and deepen their understanding of the core issues.

By hosting the course in the UK with such a diverse group of participants, there is also greater opportunity for attitudinal change. If one sector is dismissive of the value of another in a certain country, they may benefit from understanding how the same relationship is productive in other countries. Furthermore, the "safe" environment offered by the course, as well as the individuals' removal from their "work" environment, may be more conducive to softening preconceptions and breaking down barriers.

A number of government participants felt that the course had helped them to understand the value of forest communities more effectively, and had demonstrated to some individuals how unexposed they were to some important issues. One course participant reported that prior to the course,

she mainly interacted with administrative staff in the forestry department. Since the course, however, she has often advised her superiors of the necessity of working with forest communities and has consequently been given support to engage with the community as desired. This attitudinal shift was noted by other alumni, who spoke of a greater desire to work more closely with communities as a result of the training. A civil society participant also felt that the course, and the networks he developed on it, had given him access to government which he had not had previously. His organisation also invited a course participant from the government to present to the communities an update on the VPA.

A private sector participant, meanwhile, felt that the course had helped soften her opinion of civil society. Before the course, she had felt that civil society had little to contribute to multi-stakeholder processes and was sceptical of their capacity to be an informed part of such processes. However, the course introduced her to civil society members she found to be articulate and reasonable, both from her own and other countries, and she now felt more understanding and receptive of their input. She also realized the need for public information, and convinced her employer to make a site[8] and make some data about the companies and concessions within her network publicly available. One respondent commented that the course helped him realize how common his concerns were, which provided a strong rationale for the objective of building networks and alliances.

A number of participants reported skills relating to stakeholder analysis and negotiation learnt on the course, which helped them to more clearly assess the objectives of people from different sectors. One respondent commented that the course had "reignited" a dormant passion to work with local communities.

Sustained engagement in forest governance processes

In order for processes aimed at improving forest governance to succeed, they require sustained, long-term engagement. The FLEGT Action Plan, for example, has not yet delivered FLEGT licensed timber in the years since its initial publication in 2003. However, the process of negotiation and implementation that moves towards the issuance of FLEGT-licensed timber is improving the governance of producer and processing countries. Sustaining engagement in the process, by stakeholders from many different sectors, over an extended time period, requires real commitment on the part of frontline players. This is a high level objective but it is one to which the course hopes to contribute.

All of the 42 course alumni interviewed were still engaged in forest governance processes after 1-4 years, either as the main purpose or as a lesser element of their professional responsibilities. This reassures that the course is targeting the right stakeholders, as retention is a key issue in relation to capacity building programmes.

A small number of alumni who were contacted for interview were engaged in PhD studies overseas and not available to participate in the study. Their absence from the country which had sent them on the course could be interpreted as meaning that they are no longer engaged in national forest governance processes. However, the same participants might also return to their country upon completion of their PhD to continue working on forest governance processes with more authority. Ultimately, without tracing individuals in the very long-term, it would be difficult to comment convincingly on this point.

[8] Site available at: http://www.gfbcam.com/default.asp

Laurence Wete, Cameroon

Laurence attended the IFG course as a Project Assistant in 2013. She works for FODER, a civil society organization promoting natural resources as a base for sustainable development through training, advocacy, and participatory observation.

On the course, she felt her skills in project design and understanding of logical frameworks increased dramatically. As a result, she has felt more comfortable and confident putting together project proposals. She also noted that while her colleagues were also very good at writing project proposals, they would often seek her input. She is now a project manager for FODER, and feels that the IFG course was instrumental in allowing her to progress.

It is also likely that access to respondents, employing in practice an element of snowball sampling in the case of in-country interviews, would have an inherent bias in favour of those still engaged in forest governance. The corollary being that if individuals were no longer involved in the sector, they were less likely to be reached by the study.

Influence on Career Trajectory

In a similar vein as the above outcome, the career trajectory of participants is likely to be indirectly affected by the course If, as a result of the course, participants are given greater responsibilities or even a promotion, they may then have more influence with which to push for actions that improve forest governance. This could be particularly difficult to attribute, and establishing a "control group" would not be possible due to the importance of individual context. Another angle to this outcome is that the course may have encouraged course alumni to consider forestry as a longer-term career path than previously.

A number of participants reported being given greater responsibilities as a result of the training. In one case, the participant had previously been a project assistant but, thanks to the training, she is now in charge of projects; increasingly not only her own capacity but also that of her organisation to engage in more work. Another participant reported that, as a result of the course, he was supported by his Ministry to undertake further formal education to enable him to progress further still within his department.

A small number of participants had also changed jobs since the course, in one case vertical progression within the same department, in another between organisations. One participant developed a research proposal on the course which he felt had contributed to his employment with a campaigning organisation.

Stronger communication skills

In addition to sessions specifically aiming to build the communication skills of participants, the interactions possible between participants from different countries also contributes to this objective. As a result of exchanging their learning from the course with people from a range of countries and cultures, participants are expected to be better able to engage with other stakeholders and present ideas more clearly and articulately. This skill is clearly central to the success or failure of many elements of multi-stakeholder processes and is also fundamental in participants being able to advocate for better forest governance among their national peers.

Participants commenting on an improvement in communication skills articulated this point in one of two ways; either as a general improvement in daily interactions or as the utilization of specific tools and strategies to communicate more effectively. Thanks to a general improvement in knowledge and understanding, many alumni felt more competent and

Mama Mouamfon, Cameroon

Mama Mouamfon is the Director of Foundation Camerounaise de la Terre Vivante (FCTV) an attended the course in 2012. His organization works to lobby on behalf of local communities. Many of the projects his organization are involved with advocate for better governance, including around the FLEGT process.

Mama commented that the Developing a Communications Strategy module had been particularly useful for him, addressing an issue which had frequently presented itself prior to receiving the training. He found that communities to whom he regularly paid visits would not retain information about the VPA process. As a result, he found it difficult to build momentum which hampered effective community engagement and their ability to articulate a voice. Thinking strategically about how he shared information with communities, he developed posters with simple information to ensure information was retained in his absence. He now feels that things are moving in the right direction, albeit slowly.

confident to be able to articulate arguments and engage in discussions on forest governance.

On the other hand, some participants recognized an improvement in communication skills as a result of specific skills training and awareness of tools. One respondent, working as an advocacy officer for his organisation, before the course felt ill-equipped technically to fulfil his position, lacking any formal training in communication skills. Where before the course he struggled to draft advocacy plans, he now understands the need to use verifiable sources of information, to construct a logical argument, and to access information to defend his position. It was not only confidence and the soft skills associated with communication that he felt he had benefitted from, but also the training in development of a communication strategy.

Likewise, through thinking strategically about communication, one respondent observed that the communities he worked with had often forgotten about FLEGT between his visits. In response, he developed posters to place in the communities and has found that this is a much better means to disseminate information effectively. Another participant developed a social media account for the NGO network he worked for, which reaches far more of the network's stakeholders than previous strategies.

Secondary Outcomes

Sharing of learning upon return to country

It was expressed by course facilitators that participants would be expected to share their learning on return to their respective countries. Although this is a substantial assumption of the outcome of the training, it is considered a secondary outcome here as it occurs outside of the direct sphere of influence of the training and beyond the direct control of CIDT. However, it is hoped that course alumni are conduits of information for their peers, and that the training is cascaded through to other individuals within participant-sending organisations. One course participant, for example, helped a colleague develop a training workshop for media on forest governance, utilizing materials from the UK course.

For some participants, it was a specific objective that they would present what they had learned through presentations, forums or even training for other members of their organisations. For others, the submission of a return-from-training report was a requirement of their attendance. There is also an expectation that others working with the course participant would benefit through osmosis.

In the majority of cases, course participants had been required to submit some form of post-training report to their superiors or colleagues. Whilst this may have been a "tickbox exercise" for some, for others it was an opportunity to share their new knowledge and understanding with

colleagues in their department. A number of respondents also reported using course materials to inform their own training activities and workshops. Some had used the materials to update existing materials or to develop new ones, whilst others had used the materials without modification. A number of interview participants actually had the course materials on their desks, and commented that they were used frequently as sources of reference.

Other participants engaged in more formal sharing of lessons upon return to their country. In one instance, a former participant was inspired by the IFG course to celebrate the anniversary of his organisation with a forum themed on forest governance, leading to experience sharing with a further 78 people including local, national and international stakeholders. Another felt that the VPA process, at the time, was only known by those who were able to attend the meetings, and organised three workshops within different regions of his country to disseminate information.

Greater success in acquisition of funding for projects

With addition of the optional *Project Proposal Writing* module from 2012, a specific objective emerged that participants would be able to write stronger, more successful proposals for projects. The achievement of this objective might in theory be evidenced through a quantifiable increase in the success of funding proposal, which was a question posited to FAO. However, due to a number of in-country training courses focussing on proposal writing and the complexity of tracing the attribution of the IFG course through to the submission of proposals, it was not possible to quantify this directly.

However, a number of respondents commented that they had been more successful in acquiring project funding since the course, and some showed project proposals that they had worked on since returning from the course. One included the creation of an IFM training course for Civil Society, which was being implemented later that year. Equally significant was the fact that, as a result of the course, many participants felt more confident in converting their ideas into project proposals. One participant claimed that, even though she was not working on project proposals herself anymore, she was often asked to review those completed by her colleagues as a result of her recognised skills.

One course participant said he had had the beginnings of an idea for a project before the course, but did not have the confidence or the depth of knowledge to take it further. Thanks both to the confidence and knowledge developed through the training, as well as through specific mentoring support, he returned to his country and quickly put together a successful proposal, which involved working with communities to ensure that they were aware of and in a position to demand appropriate compensation from the utilization of their forests. Another participant mentioned not only having the knowledge and understanding necessary for putting proposals together, but also the increased confidence and ambition to bid for larger sums of money.

Alphonse Muhindu, DRC

Alphone is the General Secretary of Réseau CREF, a netowork for conservation and rehabilitation of forest ecosystems. After attending the course in 2013, Alphonse returned to DRC and celebrated the 10th anniversary of Reseau CREF. Inspired by the IFG course, he themed this anniversary celebration on forest governance, and the event was attended by 78 participants from local, national and international stakeholder groups.

Alphonse also wrote a report on the impact of the training on his professional life which he shared with his organization. This report is a testament to the depth of personal capacity building made possible by the format of the IFG course.

Alphonse is now planning to conduct a 5 year project in DRC, again inspired by the IFG course, which focusses on capacity building for women on forest governance.

One case of particular note led to the development or a project between course participants from Cameroon and Ghana. This project was developed and supported whilst on the course, and led to regional collaborations which neither party would have been able to conceive of without the course. This led one respondent to comment that the course was not just about the training, but about connecting people working on different issues and ideas.

More effective Trainers

With the addition of the ToT module from 2012 a specific aim to improve the effectiveness of course participants as trainers emerged. In some cases, this resulted in a specific objective of participants delivering training courses on Improving Forest Governance upon return to their countries.

Although implicitly related to the optional module, this outcome seemed evident in a broader number of course participants. One respondent commented that she had also learned as a trainer by observing the different techniques and styles demonstrated by various IFG course tutors, whilst others noted that the use of course materials had helped them train more effectively. Furthermore, by being more able to effectively analyse stakeholder needs, a number of respondents felt that the training they worked on was more responsive and relevant. One participant's objectives relating specifically to developing training modules, and he has since been asked to provide such training to the government, and felt this was a testament to the training.

A number of participants stated that they had conducted training upon return to their country both to other people within their respective institutions, as well as to external stakeholders. In one particular organisation, the respondent commented that the training had allowed them to now effectively train their own staff.

Better Presentation Skills

Whilst tying quite closely with the broader outcome of having stronger communication/training skills, this outcome relates specifically to the individual's ability to design and deliver presentations to a wider audience. Much of the knowledge generated through forest governance deliberative processes is exchanged through national, regional and international fora. The capacity of national and regional stakeholders to put across their own ideas and experiences ties quite closely to their ability to present them effectively at such events. As such, better presentation skills are important for an individual's capacity to influence and inform.

Prior to the course, many of the participants had had little exposure to international audiences and, in spite of their substantial knowledge of issues on the ground, many struggled to convey information in a concise,

Aristotle Boaitey, Ghana

Aristotle attended the course in 2012 on behalf of the Kumasi Wood Cluster (KWC), an association of small and medium forest enterprises. The association aims to support sustainable wood utilization that maintains or restores forest health and responds to social obligations, whilst also creating a market for such products.

As a result of attending the course, Aristotle worked with a fellow course participant from Ghana to develop a proposal for FAO. He also facilitated a lesson-learning visit to Ghana with multi-stakeholder representatives from Cote d'Ivoire, including two IFG alumni.

Aristotle felt that the IFG course had been very productive to both his personal career and his organization's objectives, contributing to FSC controlled wood and Chain of Custody certification for two member companies of the KWC.

meaningful way. Since the course, and as a result of training in presentation skills, a number of alumni have presented at Chatham House, Forest Governance Forums and other international, regional and national fora.

Development of a network of forest governance experts (amongst alumni)

Aligned with course aims to contribute to the strength of a community of practice within participants' respective countries, course alumni are encouraged to stay in contact with each other in both a personal and professional capacity. This was supported by the establishment of a dedicated facebook group, and it is likely that alumni also continued to stay in contact by other means of communication. In some cases, this resulted in longer-term experience sharing by participants long after course attendance, and also has helped to facilitate formal working partnerships.

Many course alumni reported that they had maintained good personal relationships with other course alumni via Skype, facebook and private email. More than just a way to stay in touch with friends, some felt reassured to know of others working on similar issues in other countries. Participants noted that they had shared stories and documents celebrating positive developments in VPA processes on both the facebook page and via private email. In some cases, this was also felt to have provided useful insights in pursuing their own objectives.

Furthermore, some alumni reported more directed interaction after the course. One individual who needed to conduct an internal audit, for example, was provided with similar documents by a participant in another country. Another reported that by learning about the wood traceability systems in other countries, he had found elements to apply in his own country, but this was a conversation initiated with a fellow participant after the course had finished.

In a number of the African countries, from which many participants have been sent, the "alumni network" was more substantial. Although some participants knew each other before the course, and indeed some applications have been generated as a result of those relationships, many people expanded their networks as a result of attending the course. Although there is not a formalized network of IFG alumni per se, many course participants frequently come across each other in daily interactions, at various national and regional events relating to forest governance, and sometimes through professional collaboration. In countries from which only a few participants have been sent, there was clearly less opportunity for a network to develop.

In the case of Laos particularly, there are a number of people operating within government departments who are recipients of the training.

However, alumni between years did not appear to be utilizing their shared understanding of forest governance issues, and whilst were aware of others who had participating in the training, they did not appear to be utilizing such resources in any dedicated capacity. As a result, what could be quite an influential team of forest governance practitioners is instead a disparate of individuals who do not necessarily benefit from complementarity. However, it should also be noted that a number of course alumni are on the national FLEGT committee, and do work together in this capacity.

In Cameroon, there was greater evidence that alumni were in contact with each other and, where possible, utilizing their professional networks. However, this process appeared to be aided by other in country processes facilitating exchange between forest governance practitioners, including the Forest Governance Forums, and a number of in-country training events and workshops.

Unanticipated Outcomes

Improvement in Language Skills

A number of respondents commented that the exposure of the six-week course had not only helped them improve their English, but also incentivised them to practice more. Some employers further testified that their staff had returned far more comfortable in using English.

The flipside of this, however, is that some participants expressed difficulty in understanding some topics in detail as their English ability was limited, although it was not possible to establish if this had substantially affected their learning outcomes. In response to a specific issue arising from the Itad/ Triple Line survey, that Francophone participants reported a slight but noticeably worse understanding of some of the course topics, this was not mentioned by any of the participants interviewed. Course reports point to certain topics as showing greater disparity between language groups; notably topics around climate change; perhaps reflecting the technical language involved.

Further Findings

As well as discussing the outcomes arising from the training, there were a number of other points raised in the interviews which are relevant to: fostering greater impact and being able to capture evidence of impact; considerations for future iterations of the course, and; the strategic relevance of the course to participants' employers.

Private Sector Engagement

Although the Private Sector has not been represented on the course to the same extent as other sectors, course alumni from the private sector expressed the need for better representation. Although some of those involved in course delivery felt that the private sector representation was particularly affected by the length of the course, some alumni felt that it was simply a lack of awareness of the course. Indeed, it is likely that course applications are generated most significantly through personal networks, which would compound the high number received by government and civil society, and the low number received by the private sector.

Gender

Although there are specific efforts to address gender concerns during participant selection, how similar concerns play into the outcomes experienced by participants after the course is less clear. Female course participants were from very different backgrounds, as much as any course participant,

and the ways in which they were using the training were equally varied. Perhaps a more substantial comment can be made about the lack of female participants from government, which totals only 6, of which only 1 was from Asia. A general lack of female participants from Asia, particularly Laos, is something to which more substantial consideration is paid during the course selection process.

Sectoral Discrepancies

Participants from different sectors and countries were utilizing the course in different ways across the board; ie, there was very little homogeneity of outcome even between participants from the same sector. However, there were some institutional factors that seemed to play out differently for civil society and government participants. The ability of government participants to pursue new initiatives in forest governance was mediated by institutional hierarchy to a greater extent than for civil society participants. For example, civil society participants were often supported in developing new ideas for projects, where government participants were more confined to utilizing their knowledge within existing responsibilities.

Integration of Training

Post-course evaluations have consistently demonstrated that participants are confident and motivated to put their learning into practice and empowered them to become key players in forest governance processes. This was further supported in interviews with respondents, some of whom described feeling “joyful”, “optimistic” and “excited” about their ability to apply their learning after the course. For individuals who were personally equipped and professionally enabled to pursue independent courses of action, there were often more tangible outcomes resulting from the training, a number of which have been highlighted in the above section.

It is clear then that support for integrating learning into practice should be proximate to a participant returning to their country. This moment is critical, with opportunities to capitalize on motivation and goodwill that might be lost if their responsibilities, which may be quite substantial after a 4-6 week absence, forces them into old routines. There was a lot of demand for support from CIDT after the course, although people were not often specific about the form that this support should or could take.

Institutional Barriers

For some more junior course participants, there were more significant challenges in not being given sufficient time and resources to develop and implement new activities. One individual had reported of his intention to utilize his communication skills by working more closely with stakeholders on the ground, but had not been given this opportunity by his superiors. Whilst the training had helped him understand forest governance issues better, and more specifically the policy processes to which his job was highly related, he was not able to lead on new ideas. Although this is not necessarily a missed opportunity, as it is possible that the individual would be given more responsibility in the future, it could be interpreted as a threat to the momentum and enthusiasm developed through the training. In this instance, the issue appears to be a lack of institutional support.

Other respondents faced different challenges. One participant commented that she felt very well equipped to work on FLEGT and, to a lesser extent REDD+, so expected her knowledge to be in high demand upon return to her country. However, she felt she had not had much opportunity to utilize her knowledge as her country was advancing through the VPA process so slowly. This was a sentiment echoed by a number of respondents, particularly from the first years of course delivery. At the start of national engagement with the FLEGT Action Plan, some participants (and probably some national governments) had high expectations of the pace of change through the VPA process.

However, the amount of time required in the negotiation phase, as well as the substantial demand on government buy-in, meant some participants felt there was not momentum for them to really get behind. In DRC particularly, some respondents felt that the reluctance of government to commit resources had limited the potential of the VPA process and, consequently, the value of their improved knowledge.

One other challenge of note was simply a lack of financial resources, particularly among civil society participants. The course had provided fresh ideas and perspectives, both through the taught content and through exchanges with other participants, and some were keen to develop these into projects in their own countries. However, without the funding, this was not always possible.

Distribution of Outcomes

Although it was worthy to consider if participants from different sectors resulted in varying degrees of impact, it is difficult to do this comprehensively. Government participants from Cameroon would clearly operate in a different context to those in Laos, making like-for-like comparisons redundant. Consequently, the sector "labels" are potentially misleading as signifiers of stakeholder perspective.

Hierarchy of Outcomes

A further distinction can be made between outcomes which relate to an improvement in "current" practices (ie, the participant is better able to do the activities they were doing before) and those which relate to changes in practice or the adoption of new practices. The most substantial outcomes from the course, and the most notable impact, arises from those outcomes which demonstrate a change in practice or the adoption of new practices. The distinctions between levels of outcome are shown in Figure 4 below.

The ways in which participants described the impact of the training most frequently related to a change or improvement in "current" practice. In this sense, some participants spoke about broad changes to the way they do their jobs, rather than describe specific improvements in forest governance that had resulted from their participation. Some participants, meanwhile, described adopting new practices which had not seemed as important, or had not been fully understood, prior to their participation in the course. A number of participants described activities which involved them promoting forest governance to a wider network of forest practitioners within their countries. Leading on promoting forest governance, whilst informing and inspiring others to do the same, is one of the most important outcomes the course can hope for.

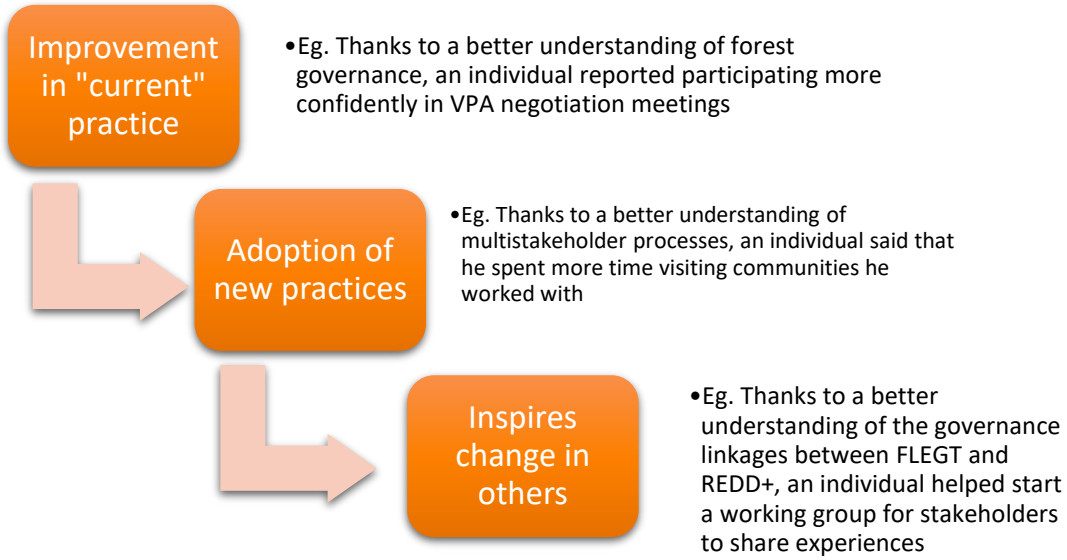


Figure 4: Hierarchy of Outcomes

The question that logically follows, is *"What enables some individuals to utilize the training to a greater extent than others?"* The most substantial outcomes occurred when one or more of the following factors were present: a particular individual capacity for leadership, a high level of institutional investment and support, or an already active community of practice into which an individual can integrate. The first two factors can be controlled, to some extent, through the course selection process. Indeed, the selection process is quite rigorous in attempting to find potential champions through substantial interaction with partner organisations on the ground. Furthermore, a management support letter is required to demonstrate the investment by employers in their employee attending the course. Ultimately, however, these systems can only increase the chances that course participants have lots of potential, but does not guarantee it. An expansion of mentoring-type activities after the course could help mitigate a lack of resources or lack of in-country support.

It is the third factor which appears to offer the most sustainable route for securing greater impact after the course. In countries from which many participants have attended the course, there has been greater interaction between course alumni. As mentioned above, in Cameroon, many people were able to describe frequent interactions with other forest governance practitioners with both formal and informal opportunities for collaboration. As such, whether or not their job provides them with the space and resources to pursue new forest governance activities, there are more external opportunities here than in other countries.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the course has been a significant, positive experience and has had real impact on the majority of participants, adding greatly to the capacity of participants to promote good forest governance in a variety of ways; albeit often dependent upon the context within which an individual works. Across the board, participants were able to describe and articulate the problems around forest governance in their countries with detail and in the majority of cases directly attributed this to the course. Many described how the training had helped them to perform their jobs better, and some pointed to specific activities that were a direct result of the course. Although some of these changes are difficult to attribute and difficult to quantify objectively due to a scarcity of standardized data and indicators, they do nonetheless illustrate the types of ways that participants have found the training useful as a means to empowering them to promote good forest governance.

The outcomes most frequently illustrated by participants, perhaps unsurprisingly, related strongly to an improvement in knowledge of forest governance issues, which they felt was demonstrated through an improvement in their capacity to do a number of activities relevant to their occupation. This is consistent with the way in which participants are recruited from diverse backgrounds and in varied contexts, in that the emerging most significant result is one which is broadly applicable to many, but in practice quite particular to the individual. Conversely, if all participants recruited represented a homogeneous group of people, the most significant result might be more uniform and specific. For example, if all participants were fundraisers for civil society organisations, the improvement in ability to write proposals might be a more obvious reported outcome.

However, it is also clear that in a number of cases, participants have been inspired by the training to pursue activities beyond their normal duties in promotion of good forest governance. In some cases this meant being more responsive to and working more closely with forest communities, in other cases it meant developing ideas for new projects, and in others still it resulted in dedicated efforts to better inform forest stakeholders of the importance of good governance. In cases where the outcomes are more significant, the institutional support received by the participant is fundamental, as it essentially underpins the individual being given the time or space to be creative with what they have learned.

An unavoidable but significant conclusion that can be drawn from engaging with IFG alumni is that it's difficult to generalize the potential outcomes of the training. In practice, this must be further understood within a number of contextual factors including the level of institutional support, the extent of national engagement in forest governance processes, and the presence or absence of a broader community of practice.

It is worth considering, then, the extent to which the course can engage with, influence or control these factors when selecting participants and supporting them upon return to their country. The course already employs a rigorous selection process with inputs from a range of relevant practitioners. This ensures, for the most part, that the individuals attending the training are in relevant positions and motivated to make a difference. The fact that all respondents still worked on forest governance in varying capacities and were able to clearly analyse and describe national challenges, demonstrated this. It was further illustrated through the fact that participants felt many elements of the training fed into a wide range of their professional duties, testifying to the relevance of forest governance to the participant.

Beyond that, attention should be given to ways to ensure that course participants are supported upon return to their country. Although management support is a requirement in the application process, it is not a guarantee of management support for an employee upon their return. Consequently, some participants return from the course to find tasks awaiting them that had accumulated in their absence. The stresses of their normal working life, as a stark contrast to the learning environment provided on the course, might interrupt the process of taking the training forward into new activities. In this scenario, there is a risk that participants fall back into routines familiar to them before the course. Although this does not mean the individual is not utilizing the training in their daily duties, it may suggest a missed opportunity to further champion good forest governance.

In countries where there is an active community of forest governance practitioners, it may be that this is less of a concern. A course participant from Cameroon, for example, would likely find many opportunities to exchange with current and former alumni upon return to their country. As a result, there would be many individuals receptive, supportive and able to offer advice on any new activities that the individual may wish to pursue. Where there is a less engaged community of practice, course participants might feel more isolated and in need of more external support.

The course has accommodated a diverse group of individuals who all face their own challenges and opportunities in improving forest governance. The positive learning outcomes and the empowerment of frontline players has resulted in some impressive outcomes. However, more needs to be done to ensure that course alumni are utilized more effectively moving forward, for they are not only a resource to the organisations they work for, but to the broader network of organisations working on forest governance. In light of this, a number of recommendations are outlined below.

Recommendations

Mentoring, Action Plans, and Post-Training Support

Whilst tutorials have already featured significantly on the course, they have not always been accompanied by the systematic development of action plans. Inherent in the capacity of tutors and participants to develop realistic Action Plans is a thorough understanding of the participants' context, and the length of the course should enable tutors to become familiar with the issues faced by participants and the key challenges they face on a personal, institutional and national level. This information would ensure that Action Plans are as feasible and detailed as possible. Some participants from referred to working on the Action Plan as completing an assignment, which perhaps moved the focus away from the steps detailed in the action plan, to the completion of the Action Plan itself.

Follow-up mentor support would be more purposeful if it is structured around the action plans. Tutors could then continue to provide guidance and advice for participants by checking back to the objectives of the action plan and helping to overcome unforeseen obstacles. If the action plan is successful, then it will be possible to record a specific outcome as a result of the course that is supplementary to improved performance in their job. This could potentially increase the impact of the course, as well as provide more robust evidence of the impact of the course. If the action plan is not successful, it would still provide useful information on what obstacles were faced, and if there are implications of that for future course delivery or recruitment. Finally, follow-up mentoring

support could also bridge the transition from a learning environment to a working environment, and provide opportunities to dismantle the barriers that exist between them.

Implicit within the significant investment of the course in select individuals is the hope that they become not only more effective in practicing forest governance, but also active as a champion of good forest governance. Action Plans would be an effective vehicle through which to expand this aspect of the training. As mentioned above, the difficulty in generalizing or predicating outcomes is substantial, but a system which provides data relating to context before, during and after the course would go a long way towards demystifying what works best for course alumni.

Introduction of a Regional Model

Where the 6-week investment of the UK course underpins a significant investment in a few select individuals, or champions, a regional model could offer a way of reaching a wider number of participants. Regional courses focussed only on the core issues of forest governance would incur fewer transaction costs, and could be designed to reach a broader set of people from within one country. This would provide opportunities for in-depth exchange between people working on the same forest governance processes, with substantial opportunities for professional collaboration after the course.

By focussing on the core forest governance issues, the course could also be shorter and appeal to people who might not be able to attend the 6-week course – notably the private sector. Although a course of this nature might not provide the depth of understanding a variety of skills offered by the UK course, it would contribute more rapidly to a broader community of people who are receptive of forest governance issues and better able to engage in a national dialogue. Where the UK course has enabled participants to perform their jobs more effectively and, in some cases, to work on new forest governance initiatives, these shorter courses would focus more on training staff involved in implementation at centralized and decentralized levels. These courses could also utilize in-country IFG alumni to help design and deliver the training.

Small Grant Scheme

Given that a number of course participants felt that the lack of funds was a key issue on return to their countries, a small grant scheme could offer a way for participants to initiate activities. Whilst not funding entire projects, these small grants could enable participants and their organisations to commission research, develop proposals and even begin to implement activities that might later become projects. It could also buy staff time to allow individuals to pursue activities beyond their normal remit.

Formalization of the Alumni Network

A formal alumni network could provide a more effective way to sustain relationships developed on the course, as well as support participants to engage with alumni from other years. Currently, there is little incentive through the facebook group for an individual from 2012 to speak to an individual from 2010, especially if they do not represent the same country. This situation creates barriers between years of attendance which might actually prevent valuable experience sharing between forest governance practitioners.

Alumni events which are designed to accommodate alumni from all years could help create a more cohesive network. Whilst a physical event could prove costly and logistically challenging, it could instead involve an online platform with opportunities for debates, discussion forums, or seminars. This platform could then also be a resource for external partners to use to search for national forest

governance experts which could include webinars, moderated online discussion. A more cost-effective way to facilitate some of these exchanges could be through other in-country events; notably in relation to FLEGT or forest governance.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: SAMPLE INTERVIEW NOTES

Interviewee name: Alphonse Muhindu

Interviewee country: DRC

Year attended IFG: 2013

Notes: Interviewed conducted via Skype

Personal Information

1) What was your role when you participated in the IFG course?	Attended in 2013. General secretary of *Réseau CREF*: Network for conservation and rehabilitation of forest ecosystems
2) Is this still your current occupation? a. If not, is your current occupation involved in FLEGT-VPA? b. If not, why?	Yes
(**If no longer at the organisation**: 3) What were your organisation's objectives and how did your role contribute to that?)	

Forest Governance in Participant's Country

4a) What are the key challenges involved in FLEGT-VPA in your country?	One issue is the lack of information available to stakeholders about FLEGT processes. For example, he works in the east of the country in North Kivu where people know very little about FLEGT-VPA. He thinks perhaps the reason for this is that there is no industrial timber exploitation in this region - just artisanal logging - so it is important to ensure that all the policies and decisions involved with FLEGT incorporate artisanal timber exploitation as well as industrial. The second challenge is around the divergence between the various provinces in DRC of the implementation of rules and controls around forest exploitation. There needs to be more harmonisation between the various provinces to ensure that loggers in certain provinces e.g. Orientale do not end up having to pay extra

	duties as they transport the logs through other provinces to export them. If they feel that they are being penalised unfairly, it discourages them from observing the rules which affects the whole system. There is also still a lack of technical capacity (e.g. for monitoring of governance processes) and also a lack of financial resources to tackle the issues.
4b) What can help overcome those challenges?	Harmonisation of the rules. For example, his organisation has done a study on timber value chains which revealed that there is a strong need to harmonise rules between the different provinces as this is where the process of tackling illegal logging is weakest. They are currently trying to organise a meeting to bring together the authorities from different provinces to address this issue. It is also important to continue with independent monitoring as this identifies where there are irregularities and where rules and laws are being infringed. It needs to be intensified and better structured to make it even more effective than it is now. Monitoring also facilitates a third thing which is required: lobbying. There needs to be more lobbying of the government to increase transparency and to say "this is what is going wrong, here are the facts and here are our recommendations for what needs to be done." Financial resources will also help overcome these challenges.
5) What has changed (improved/worsened) in the last 5 years?	The main thing which has changed is an increase in participation of civil society in the development of forest regulations. Civil society is represented on steering committees at a national level and is involved in drafting legal texts. The second thing is that there is increasingly more dialogue between the state authorities and other actors. He cannot say that corruption has decreased - it is still there at the highest levels - but there is much more dialogue and stakeholders and involved in policy development around REDD, community forestry

	etc.

Background/Relevance

6) Prior to the course, how were you personally involved in forest governance processes?	He is the North Kivu coordinator of the national network RRN (natural resources network). He conducts capacity building in forest governance. For example, he is currently launching a gender empowerment project focused on women leaders and forest governance. The aim is to increase the participation of women in engagement with the authorities on issues relating to forest governance in North Kivu.
7) What challenges did you and your organisation face?	The main challenge is around the government's priorities in making decisions about issues to be addressed. Essentially, forest governance issues are not being given priority which is a huge obstacle to their work. For example, since 2010, their organisation has been working to get a decree passed which would improve governance. They took a highly participatory approach in drafting the decree to ensure it was relevant and in the interests of communities etc. The decree, however, has still not been passed by the provincial government authorities as they do not recognise its importance. They prioritise other issues over forest governance.
8) Had you been on professional development training before? What? When? How does IFG compare?	In his 22 years of working in the sector, he has undertaken many trainings particularly at the national level. There was one, however, in Holland, at Waagingen University on decentralisation and local governance. This was in 2010. The IFG is by far the longest training he has ever done. It was great but very intense and perhaps too long**.** He complained to Jill at the time about the fact that he thought the course really lacked a focus on gender. He also thinks that it should have been more practical, with more case studies from different countries. Since most of the participants are, in

	some way, field agents, he thinks that it should have been more practical. More case studies would have been useful with more of a focus on analysing real life situations to see what could be learnt from them.
9) How did you, or your employer, become aware of the IFG course? a. If you were aware of the course before the year you applied, what reputation did it have?	He came across it online by chance. He applied in 2011 but was unsuccessful (he does not know why). Then he applied again in 2012 and was supported by Global Witness. He was already in contact with staff from CIDT and they encouraged him to apply again - if they hadn't, he might have been too discouraged to re-apply.
10) Why did your employer support your application?	He is the head of the organisation and he recognised how relevant the course was to his work so he was keen to apply.
11) Thinking back to before you arrived in Telford, what did you personally hope to get out of the course? (not what you did get out of it but hoped to)	Before the training, the issue of forest governance was not clear in his head. Whenever people spoke about good or bad governance, his understanding was limited simply to forest management. But the course allowed him to really analyse and understand what was meant by governance. It has meant that now, when people talk about governance, he can drill down into the detail and analyse whether it is a problem of transparency, traceability, respecting the rules etc. And by really being able to analyse the problems, it allows one to find the appropriate solution. So his key aim was to gain a more nuanced understanding of forest governance which he feels he succeeded in doing.
12) Did you or your organisation have specific objectives for you to achieve on your return from the IFG course? PROBE: Did these relate to particular elements of the course?	Not only did they (he and his organisation) know that the training would strengthen the work they were doing but it would also allow them to be more creative in looking at new projects and new approaches.

Impact

13) Post-course evaluations have tended to	He was so happy with the training he received

suggest that participants are confident, enthusiastic and have the momentum to apply their learning immediately after the course. How did you feel when returning to your country?	and felt so well-informed and well-prepared to tackle forest governance issues that he even asked himself, "How did I do my job before the training?!"
14) Did the course change your understanding of forest governance issues?	See qu 11
15) (How did the course impact upon your professional knowledge and skills? b. Were there any topics or skills that you struggled with prior to the course? c. Were these issues addressed on the course? d. Which topics were most/least useful?	He was keen to learn more about REDD+, FLEGT-VPA and he also discovered a new topic when he was in Telford - PES. He now dreams of being able to apply his knowledge of PES to a project in DRC. He took the climate change module and found it all extremely useful. All the topics in the course are complementary so it provides a very good holistic perspective. He thinks that a module on gender and the role of women in forest governance should be added.
(Might have already been answered above...) 16) What outputs or activities do these improvements in knowledge and skills contribute to? a. Have they enabled you to perform your job responsibilities better? Specific things	In 2013, (after the training) he developed a new 5 year strategic plan for his organisation with a new focus on forest governance and he really feels that the training enabled him to develop a much more relevant and ambitious plan than he would have managed before the training. The main part of the training which he finds useful on a daily basis is the eight principles of good governance. He applies these principles within his work, at the organisational level and also with his family.
17) Were there opportunities (in the short or long term) which allowed you to build upon your new skills and knowledge? PROBE: This could include attending other training, greater participation in events, greater opportunities to network. Did the course have any impact on your professional opportunities/ career path? (qu 20)	In 2013, he came back to Telford for a training on communication.
18) Has anything prevented or hindered you	No. Since he is the head of his organisation, he

from putting your skills and knowledge into practice?	has been free to introduce new ideas he gained at the training, such as the forum (see qu 24), the strategic plan, etc.
19) Did the course have any lasting impact on you on a more personal level? PROBE: Confidence, communication, social skills, better presenter, influence	Yes - more confidence in what he is doing as he knows that it is in line with well-established concepts of good governance.
21) Do you think that the key players in FLEGT VPA in your country are represented on the course?	No. This is a big problem. There is very strong demand for the course and there are many people who want to attend but who cannot. He suggests perhaps decentralising the training so that it is by country or group of countries to reduce the cost.

Lasting Impact

22) Have you had any contact with any of the sponsor organisations (DFID/EFI/GiZ/FAO) since the course?	No.
23) Do you maintain a productive, professional relationship with any other IFG alumni? If you were already in contact with some individuals, has the course strengthened your personal and professional relationship? Did you meet people on the course, who you wouldn't have met otherwise, who have been useful to you professionally in terms of FLEGT-VPA?	Yes, but the contact he has with them is more personal than professional.
24) Have you passed your learning from the course on to any colleagues, within or outside of your organisation? Informally or formally (mentoring, debrief session, workshops etc...)	He organised a forum in 2013 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his organisation. The theme was forest governance and he was inspired to do this by the training he received on the IFG. There were 78 participants including local stakeholders, national and international (partners). It was a good opportunity to exchange ideas. He produced a report on what he had learnt on the course which he shared within his organisation. He has organised multiple workshops attended by colleagues from his organisation as well as external colleagues. For example, one covered the eight principles of governance.

	He wrote a report on the impact of the training on his professional life which he shared within his organisation *(we have a copy of this*). He has also conducted two trainings at a university in North Kivu on project design and management. He thinks he will continue with this each year.
25) What follow up work could be done by CIDT to ensure that the benefits of the course are sustained when participants return to their countries?	The IFG training continues to inspire course participants when they are return to their country. The real challenge is that they cannot put all they have learnt into practice as they do not have the financial means to do so. He thinks that he would be useful if CIDT could provide some more support in this area. Perhaps they could help alumni to implement projects by supporting them to find the required funds.

Final comments

26) Is there anything which has not been covered which you would like to add?	He is planning to conduct a 5 year project in DRC which is inspired by the IFG training and which is essentially a capacity building course specifically for women on forest governance. His organisation has a partnership with Rainforest Foundation for the first two years but he would also like it if CIDT were involved given that they invested in him and the inspiration came from IFG. He would also like to see if there would be funding opportunities available through partnering with CIDT.
27) Please give details of two people we can follow up with.	

ANNEX B: LIST OF ALUMNI PARTICIPATING IN STUDY

No.	Name	Sector	Gender	Attended in	Country
1	Savann Suon	Government	M	2011	Cambodia
2	Pierre Mbarga	Academia	M	2011	Cameroon
3	Mama Mouamfon	Civil Society	M	2012	Cameroon
4	Erith Leolein Ngatchou Towo	Private Sector	M	2010	Cameroon
5	Patrick Kanga	Government	M	2012	Cameroon
6	Ibrahim Houe	Government	M	2013	Cameroon
7	Sylvie Essiane Owono	Government	F	2012	Cameroon
8	Laurence Wete	Civil Society	M	2013	Cameroon
9	Blandine Ouiguia	Private Sector	F	2012	Cameroon
10	Rodrigue Ngonzo Tsague	Civil Society	M	2012	Cameroon
11	Benjamin Tchoffo	Civil Society	M	2011	Cameroon
12	Christian Zebaze	Civil Society	F	2012	Cameroon
13	Germain Yene	Civil Society	M	2011	Cameroon
14	Stanislas Bineli	Civil Society	M	2011	Cameroon
15	Elie Oliver Ngoa Yakam	Civil Society	M	2011	Cameroon
16	Patrice Kamkuimo Piam	Civil Society	M	2012	Cameroon
17	Ynsa Traore	Government	M	2012	Cote d'Ivoire
18	Hyppolite Ditona	Government	M	2013	DRC
19	Jean-Marie Nkanda	Civil Society	M	2012	DRC
20	Gaius Elenga	Government	M	2011	DRC
21	Alphonse Muhindu	Civil Society	M	2012	DRC
22	Jean-Marie Bolika	Civil Society	M	2013	DRC
23	Joelle Mukungu	Civil Society	F	2010	DRC
24	Agyemang-Prempeh Koranteng	Private Sector	M	2012	Ghana
25	Kwame Mensah	Civil Society	M	2012	Ghana
26	Alex Agyemang	Government	M	2013	Ghana
27	Kwabena Boakye	Government	M	2011	Ghana
28	William Dumenu	Academia	M	2012	Ghana
29	Aristotle Boaitey	Private Sector	M	2012	Ghana
30	Dedi Haryadi	Government	M	2010	Indonesia
31	Rio Rovihandono	Civil Society	M	2011	Indonesia
32	Khamphone Bounthavy	Government	M	2012	Laos
33	Thongpanh Ratanalangsy	Government	M	2010	Laos
34	Phoxai Inthaboualy	Government	M	2013	Laos
35	Keophouvong Chantapanya	Government	M	2011	Laos
36	Khamphout Phandanouvong	Government	M	2011	Laos
37	Aod Duangpachane	Civil Society	M	2013	Laos
38	Thongsavanh Soulignamat	Private Sector	M	2013	Laos
39	Jonathan Yiah	Civil Society	M	2010	Liberia

40	Alain Oss	Government	M	2013	RoC
41	Sylvie Niongo Ngoueme	Civil Society	F	2013	RoC
42	Thada Suwannaimon	Government	M	2011	Thailand

ANNEX C: SURVEY OF IFG ALUMNI, CONDUCTED BY ITAD/ TRIPLE LINE AS PART OF THE FGMC 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Annex to the FGMC 2014 AR

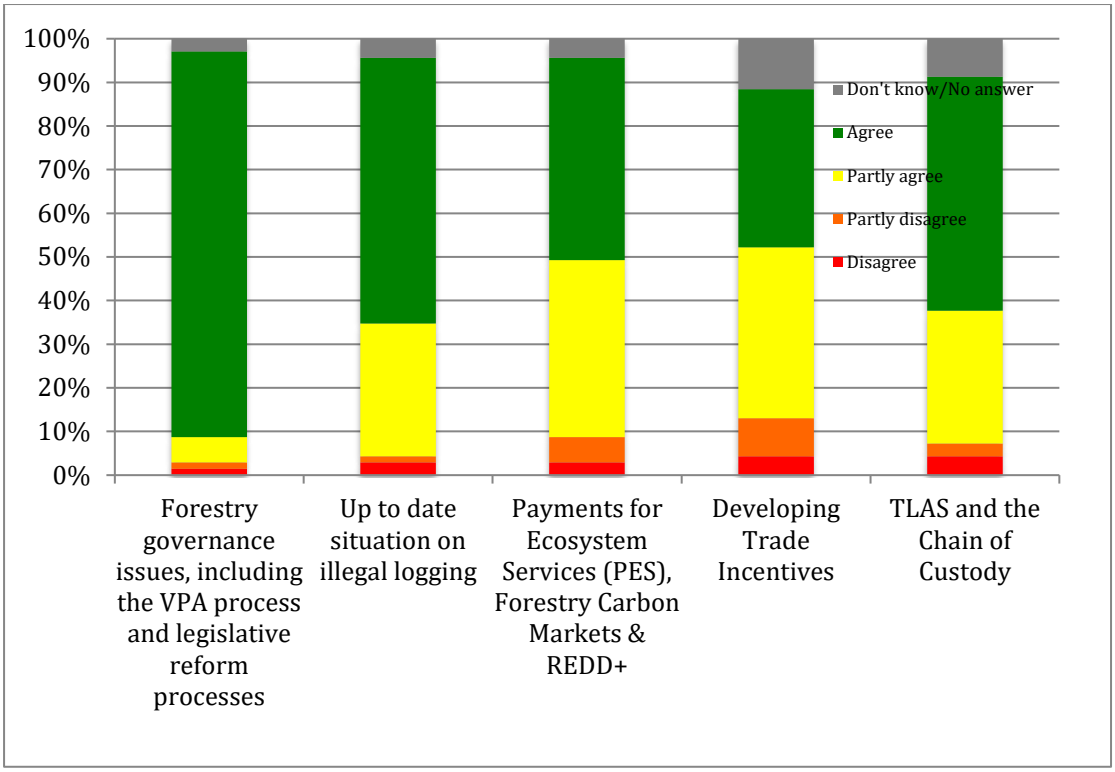
CIDT International Forest Governance Course: Alumni Survey

The Centre for International Development and Training's (CIDT) International Forest Governance Course: Alumni Survey was designed and analysed by ITAD Ltd. using Survey monkey. The survey was disseminated through CIDT in English and French. About 100 alumni were targeted with 69 alumni responding between 22 May and 8 June 2014. Hence the response rate is extraordinarily high for such a survey.

41% of respondents were government employees and 45% members of civil society organisations, followed by 7% academics, 4% media representatives (3), 1% private sector staff (1)[9]. 68 respondents were from producing countries and one from a processing country (Viet Nam). The survey used the knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) approach and was structured accordingly.
Overall, the vast majority of alumni assessed the contribution of the IFG course to better knowledge as high to very high for all criteria but some nuances emerge, as shown in figure 6. 88% of respondents agreed that the IFG improved their knowledge about forestry governance issues, including the VPA process and legislative reform processes. This is the area with the highest level of improved knowledge. 61% of respondents agreed about the IFG course contributing to better knowledge on the up to date situation on illegal logging while this rate drops to 36% for the development of trade incentives. However, the rate of respondents partly agreeing is still high even for this criterion (39%) while 13% partly or fully disagreed.

Figure 6: IFG contributing to better knowledge

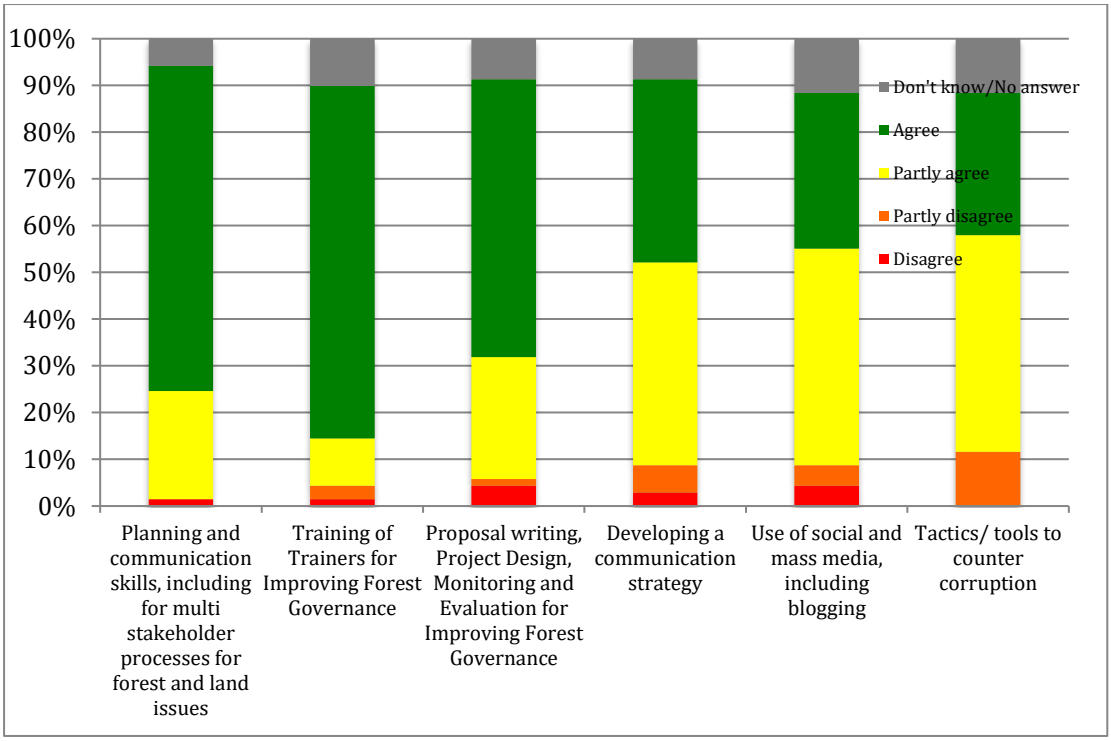
[9] 2% did not respond to the question



A significant difference shows between Anglophone and Francophone survey respondents for the enhanced knowledge in Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), Forestry Carbon Markets & REDD+: While 63% of Anglophone alumni agreed about better knowledge in the above criteria, only 29% of Francophone alumni did.

IFG's contribution to an enhanced skills based of alumni is again high to very high for practically all criteria (see figure 7). Respondents gave the highest ratings for IFG's contribution to enhanced skills for training of trainers for improving forestry governance (75%), followed by planning and communication skills for multi-stakeholder processes (70%). Respondents' skills seem less improved in terms of tactics or tools to counter corruption (46% partly agree and 12% partly disagree) and the use of social and mass media (46% partly agree and 9% partly disagree or disagree).
Again, a significant difference emerges between Anglophone and Francophone alumni for one criterion. 49% of Anglophone alumni agreed that the IFG contributed to skills to develop a communication strategy compared to 29% of Francophone alumni.

Figure 7: IFG contributing to better skills

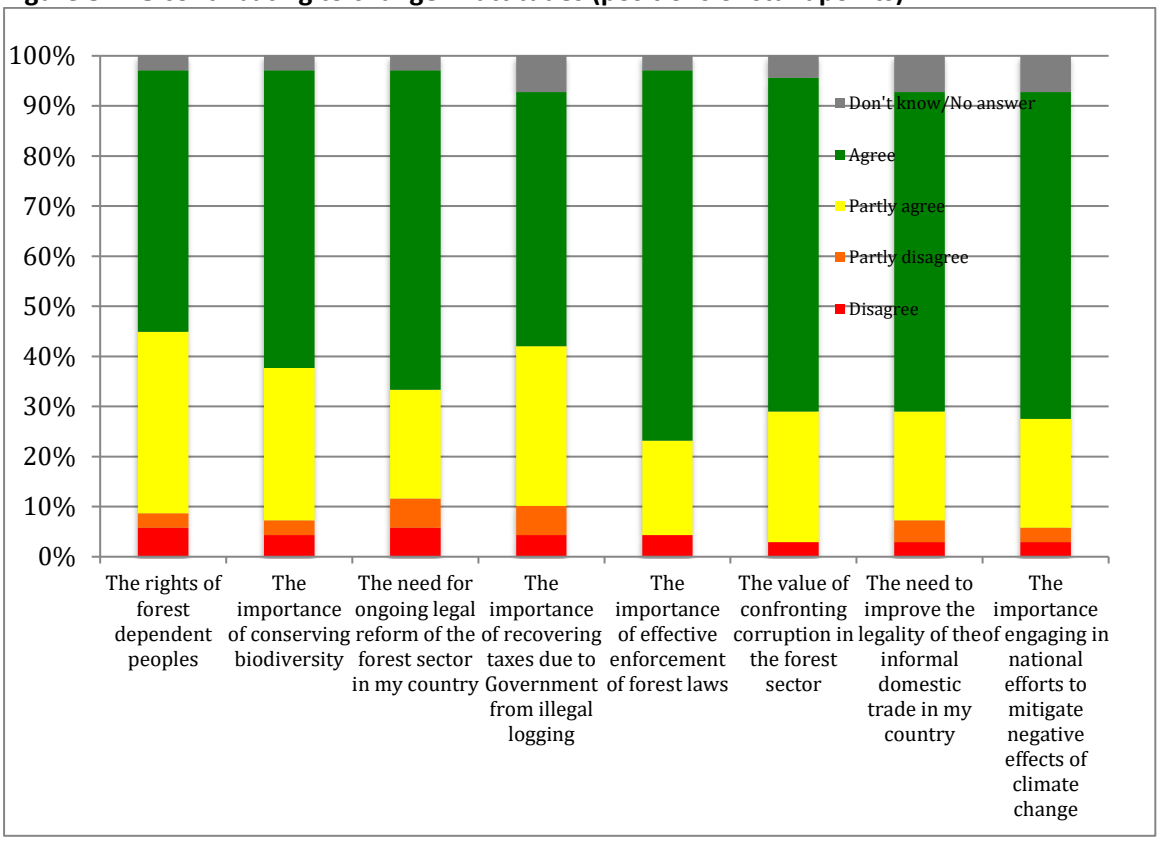


As for knowledge and skills, the vast majority of IFG alumni state that the course contributed to a high or very high degree to a *change in their attitudes or standpoints* (see figure 8).

74% of alumni agree that the course contributed to changing their attitudes regarding the importance of effective enforcement of forest laws, followed by 67% of alumni agreeing about changes in attitudes when confronting corruption in the forest sector. The change in attitudes seems slightly lower for the need for on-going legal reform of the forest sector at country level with 12% of alumni disagreeing or partly disagreeing.

Following the changes in knowledge and attitudes, have alumni also taken practical steps to change forest governance in their home countries or regions? 56% of respondents state that they have taken such practical steps, indicating a change in practice. 26% of alumni partly agree and 9% disagree or partly disagree about a change in practice.

Figure 8: IFG contributing to change in attitudes (positions or standpoints)



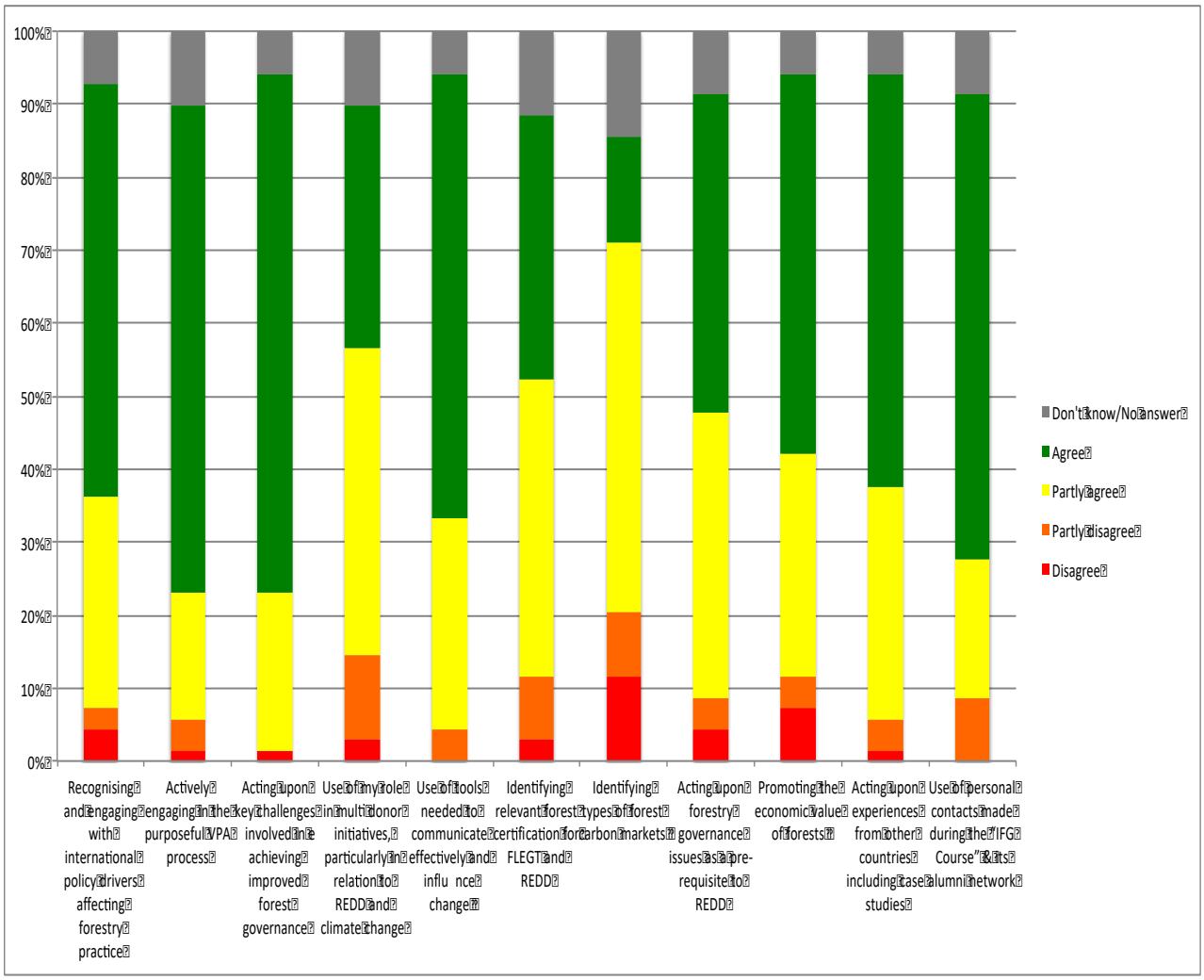
The question arises what specific steps alumni have taken. 71% of alumni agree that they have acted upon key challenges in achieving improved forest governance while 67% agree about their involvement tin the purposeful VPA process. 63% of alumni agree that they are using personal contacts made during the IFG course and its alumni network. Those three areas indicate most change in the practice of alumni (see figure 9).

The areas of less change relate to the identification of types of forest carbon markets (14% agree, 51% partly agree, 21% partly disagree or disagree and 14% don't know) while other criteria score significantly higher. 33% of alumni agreed about changes in the use of their role in multi-donor initiatives while 42% only partly agree (15% partly disagree or disagree). With regard to changes in identifying relevant forest certification for FLEGT and REDD, 36% of alumni indicate that they have taken practical stapes while 41% partly agree (12% partly disagree or disagree).

Alumni identify the following challenges to changing practices in their jobs:

i) Lack of accessibility of large body of data; ii) Lack of research on practical solutions rather than adding to academic discourse; iii) Existing research focuses on VPA countries and often emphasises negative impacts rather than opportunities in those countries, which can create resistance against the VPA process; iv) IFG trains often junior and mid level staff that struggles to apply new thinking, particularly in government bureaucracies; v) Particularly for most Francophone IFG alumni: lack of funding (for research or action plans).

Figure 9: IFG contributing to change of practice



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